



ESSAYS.

(SELECTED.)

LORD BACON.

WARREN HASTINGS.

WILLIAM PITT.

By THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY.

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LORD BACON.*

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WE return our hearty thanks to Mr. Montagu for this truly valuable work. From the opinions which he expresses as a biographer we often dissent. But about his merit as a collector of the materials out of which opinions are formed, there can be no dispute; and we readily acknowledge that we are in a great measure indebted to his minute and accurate researches for the means of refuting what we cannot but consider as his errors.

The labor which has been bestowed on this volume has been a labor of love. The writer is evidently enamoured of the subject. It fills his heart. It constantly overflows from his lips and his pen. Those who are acquainted with the Courts in which Mr. Montagu practises with so much ability and success well know how often he enlivens the discussion of a point of law by citing some weighty aphorisms, or some brilliant illustration, from the *De Augmentis* or the *Novum Organum*. The Life before us doubtless owes much of its value to the honest and generous enthusiasm of the writer. This feeling has stimulated his activity, has sustained his perseverance, has called forth all his ingenuity and eloquence: but, on the other hand, we must frankly say that it has, to a great extent, perverted his judgment.

* *The works of Francis Bacon, Lord Chancellor of England. A new Edition.* BY BASIL MONTAGU, Esq., 16 vols. 8vo. London: 1825-1834.

We are by no means without sympathy for Mr. Montagu even in what we consider as his weakness. There is scarcely any delusion which has a better claim to be indulgently treated than that under the influence of which a man ascribes every moral excellence to those who have left imperishable monuments of their genius. The causes of this error lie deep in the inmost recesses of human nature. We are all inclined to judge of others as we find them. Our estimate of a character always depends much on the manner in which that character affects our own interests and passions. We find it difficult to think well of those by whom we are thwarted or depressed; and we are ready to admit every excuse for the vices of those who are useful or agreeable to us. This is, we believe, one of those illusions to which the whole human race is subject, and which experience and reflection can only partially remove. It is, in the phraseology of Bacon, one of the *idola tribus*. Hence it is that the moral character of a man eminent in letters or in the fine arts is treated, often by contemporaries, almost always by posterity, with extraordinary tenderness. The world derives pleasure and advantage from the performances of such a man. The number of those who suffer by his personal vices is small, even in his own time when compared with the number of those to whom his talents are a source of gratification. In a few years all those whom he has injured disappear. But his works remain, and are a source of delight to millions. The genius of Sallust is still with us. But the Numidians whom he plundered, and the unfortunate husbands who caught him in their houses at unseasonable hours, are forgotten. We suffer ourselves to be delighted by the keenness of Clarendon's observation, and by the sober majesty of his style, till we forget the oppressor and the bigot in the historian. Falstaff and Tom Jones have survived the

gamekeepers whom Shakspeare cudgelled and the landladies whom Fielding bilked. A great writer is the friend and benefactor of his readers; and they cannot but judge of him under the deluding influence of friendship and gratitude. We all know how unwilling we are to admit the truth of any disgraceful story about a person whose society we like, and from whom we have received favors; how long we struggle against evidence, how fondly, when the facts cannot be disputed, we cling to the hope that there may be some explanation or some extenuating circumstance with which we are unacquainted. Just such is the feeling which a man of liberal education naturally entertains towards the great minds of former ages. The debt which he owes to them is incalculable. They have guided him to truth. They have filled his mind with noble and graceful images. They have stood by him in all vicissitudes, comforters in sorrow, nurses in sickness, companions in solitude. These friendships are exposed to no danger from the occurrences by which other attachments are weakened or dissolved. Time glides on; fortune is inconstant; tempers are soured; bonds which seem indissoluble are daily sundered by interest, by emulation, or by caprice. But no such cause can affect the silent converse which we hold with the highest of human intellects. That placid intercourse is disturbed by no jealousies or resentments. These are the old friends who are never seen with new faces, who are the same in wealth and in poverty, in glory and in obscurity. With the dead there is no rivalry. In the dead there is no change. Plato is never sullen. Cervantes is never petulant. Demosthenes never comes unseasonably. Dante never stays too long. No difference of political opinion can alienate Cicero. No heresy can excite the horror of Bossuet.

Nothing, then, can be more natural than that a person endowed with sensibility and imagi-

nation should entertain a respectful and affectionate feeling towards those great men with whose minds he holds daily communion. Yet nothing can be more certain than that such men have not always deserved to be regarded with respect or affection. Some writers, whose works will continue to instruct and delight mankind to the remotest ages, have been placed in such situations that their actions and motives are as well known to us as the actions and motives of one human being can be known to another; and unhappily their conduct has not always been such as an impartial judge can contemplate with approbation. But the fanaticism of the devout worshipper of genius is proof against all evidence and all argument. The character of his idol is a matter of faith; and the province of faith is not to be invaded by reason. He maintains his superstition with a credulity as boundless, and a zeal as unscrupulous, as can be found in the most ardent partisans of religious or political factions. The most decisive proofs are rejected; the plainest rules of morality are explained away; extensive and important portions of history are completely distorted. The enthusiast misrepresents facts with all the effrontery of an advocate, and confounds right and wrong with all the dexterity of a Jesuit; and all this only in order that some man who has been in his grave during many ages may have a fairer character than he deserves.

Middleton's *Life of Cicero* is a striking instance of the influence of this sort of partiality. Never was there a character which it was easier to read than that of Cicero. Never was there a mind keener or more critical than that of Middleton. Had the biographer brought to the examination of his favorite statesman's conduct but a very small part of the acuteness and severity which he displayed when he was engaged in investigating the high pretensions of Epiphanius and Justin Martyr,

he could not have failed to produce a most valuable history of a most interesting portion of time. But this most ingenious and learned man, though

“ So wary held and wise
That, as 'twas said, he scarce received
For gospel what the church believed,”

had a superstition of his own. The great Iconoclast was himself an idolator. The great *Advocato del Diavolo*, while he disputed, with no small ability, the claims of Cyprian and Athanasius to a place in the Calendar, was himself composing a lying legend in honor of St. Tully. He was holding up as a model of every virtue a man whose talents and acquirements, indeed, can never be too highly extolled, and who was by no means destitute of amiable qualities, but whose whole soul was under the dominion of a girlish vanity and a craven fear. Actions for which Cicero himself, the most eloquent and skilful of advocates, could contrive no excuse, actions which in his confidential correspondence he mentioned with remorse and shame, are represented by his biographer as wise, virtuous, heroic. The whole history of that great revolution which overthrew the Roman aristocracy the whole state of parties, the character of every public man, is elaborately misrepresented, in order to make out something which may look like a defence of one most eloquent and accomplished trimmer.

The volume before us reminds us now and then of the Life of Cicero. But there is this marked difference. Dr. Middleton evidently had an uneasy consciousness of the weakness of his cause, and therefore resorted to the most disingenuous shifts, to unpardonable distortions and suppression of facts. Mr. Montagu's faith is sincere and implicit. He practises no trickery. He conceals nothing. He puts the facts before us in the full confidence that they will produce on our minds the effect which they

have produced on his own. It is not till he comes to reason from facts to motives that his partiality shows itself; and then he leaves Middleton himself far behind. His word proceeds on the assumption that Bacon was an eminently virtuous man. From the tree Mr. Montagu judges of the fruit. He is forced to relate many actions which, if any man but Bacon had committed them, nobody would have dreamed of defending, actions which are readily and completely explained by supposing Bacon to have been a man whose principles were not strict, and whose spirit was not high, actions which can be explained in no other way without resorting to some grotesque hypothesis for which there is not a title of evidence. But any hypothesis is, in Mr. Montagu's opinion, more probable than that his hero should ever have done anything very wrong.

This mode of defending Bacon seems to us by no means Baconian. To take a man's character for granted, and then from his character to infer the moral quality of all his actions, is surely a process the very reverse of that which is recommended in the *Novum Organum*. Nothing, we are sure, could have led Mr. Montagu to depart so far from his master's precepts, except zeal for his master's honor. We shall follow a different course. We shall attempt, with the valuable assistance which Mr. Montagu has afforded us, to frame such an account of Bacon's life as may enable our readers correctly to estimate his character.

It is hardly necessary to say that Francis Bacon was the son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, who held the great seal of England during the first twenty years of the reign of Elizabeth. The fame of the father has been thrown into the shade by that of the son. But Sir Nicholas was no ordinary man. He belonged to a set of men whom it is easier to describe collectively than separately, whose minds were formed by one system of discipline, who belonged to one

rank in society, to one university, to one party, to one sect, to one administration, and who resembled each other so much in talents, in opinions, in habits, in fortunes, that one character, we had almost said one life, may, to a considerable extent, serve for them all.

They were the first generation of statesmen by profession that England produced. Before their time the division of labor had, in this respect, been very imperfect. Those who had directed public affairs had been, with few exceptions, warriors or priests; warriors whose rude courage was neither guided by science nor softened by humanity, priests whose learning and abilities were habitually devoted to the defence of tyranny and imposture. The Hotspurs, the Nevilles, the Cliffords, rough, illiterate, and unreflecting, brought to the council-board the fierce and imperious disposition which they had acquired amidst the tumult of predatory war, or in the gloomy repose of the garrisoned and moated castle. On the other side was the calm and subtle prelate, versed in all that was then considered as learning, trained in the Schools to manage words, and in the confessional to manage hearts, seldom superstitious, but skilful in practising on the superstition of others, false, as it was natural that a man should be whose profession imposed on all who were not saints the necessity of being hypocrites, selfish, as it was natural that a man should be who could form no domestic ties and cherish no hope of legitimate posterity, more attached to his order than to his country, and guiding the politics of England with a constant side-glance at Rome.

But the increase of wealth, the progress of knowledge, and the reformation of religion produced a great change. The nobles ceased to be military chieftains; the priests ceased to possess a monopoly of learning; and a new and remarkable species of politicians appeared.

These men came from neither of the classes

which had, till then, almost exclusively furnished ministers of state. They were all laymen ; yet they were all men of learning ; and they were all men of peace. They were not members of the aristocracy. They inherited no titles, no large domains, no armies of retainers, no fortified castles. Yet they were not low men, such as those whom princes, jealous of the power of a nobility, have sometimes raised from forges and cobblers' stalls to the highest situations. They were all gentlemen by birth. They had all received a liberal education. It is a remarkable fact that they were all members of the same university. The two great national seats of learning had even then acquired the characters which they still retain. In intellectual activity, and in readiness to admit improvements, the superiority was then, as it has ever since been, on the side of the less ancient and splendid institution. Cambridge had the honor of educating those celebrated Protestant Bishops whom Oxford had the honor of burning ; and at Cambridge were formed the minds of all those statesmen to whom chiefly is to be attributed the secure establishment of the reformed religion in the north of Europe.

The statesmen of whom we speak passed their youth surrounded by the incessant din of theological controversy. Opinions were still in a state of chaotic anarchy, intermingling, separating, advancing, receding. Sometimes the stubborn bigotry of the Conservatives seemed likely to prevail. Then the impetuous onset of the Reformers for a moment carried all before it. Then again the resisting mass made a desperate stand, arrested the movement, and forced it slowly back. The vacillation which at that time appeared in English legislation, and which it has been the fashion to attribute to the caprice and to the power of one or two individuals, was truly a national vacillation. It was not only in the mind of Henry that the new

theology obtained the ascendant one day, and that the lessons of the nurse and of the priest regained their influence on the morrow. It was not only in the House of Tudor that the husband was exasperated by the opposition of the wife, that the son dissented from the opinions of the father, that the brother persecuted the sister, that one sister persecuted another. The principles of Conservation and Reform carried on their warfare in every part of society, in every congregation, in every school of learning, round the hearth of every private family, in the recesses of every reflecting mind.

It was in the midst of this ferment that the minds of the persons whom we are describing were developed. They were born Reformers. They belonged by nature to that order of men who always form the front ranks in the great intellectual progress. They were, therefore, one and all, Protestants. In religious matters, however, though there is no reason to doubt that they were sincere, they were by no means zealous. None of them chose to run the smallest personal risk during the reign of Mary. None of them favored the unhappy attempt of Northumberland in favor of his daughter-in-law. None of them shared in the desperate councils of Wyatt. They contrived to have business on the Continent; or, if they staid in England, they heard mass and kept Lent with great decorum. When those dark and perilous years had gone by, and when the crown had descended to a new sovereign, they took the lead in the reformation of the Church. But they proceeded, not with the impetuosity of theologians, but with the calm determination of statesmen. They acted, not like men who considered the Romish worship as a system too offensive to God, and too destructive of souls to be tolerated for an hour, but like men who regarded the points in dispute among Christians as in themselves unimportant, and who were not restrained by any scruple of con-

science from professing, as they had before professed, the Catholic faith of Mary, the Protestant faith of Edward, or any of the numerous intermediate combinations which the caprice of Henry and the servile policy of Cranmer had formed out of the doctrines of both the hostile parties. They took a deliberate view of the state of their own country and of the Continent ; they satisfied themselves as to the leaning of the public mind ; and they chose their side. They placed themselves at the head of the Protestants of Europe, and staked all their fame and fortunes on the success of their party.

It is needless to relate how dexterously, how resolutely, how gloriously they directed the politics of England during the eventful years which followed, how they succeeded in uniting their friends and separating their enemies, how they humbled the pride of Philip, how they backed the unconquerable spirit of Coligni, how they rescued Holland from tyranny, how they founded the maritime greatness of their country, how they outwitted the artful politicians of Italy, and tamed the ferocious chieftains of Scotland. It is impossible to deny that they committed many acts which would justly bring on a statesman of our time censures of the most serious kind. But when we consider the state of morality in their age, and the unscrupulous character of the adversaries against whom they had to contend, we are forced to admit that it is not without reason that their names are still held in veneration by their countrymen.

There were, doubtless, many diversities in their intellectual and moral character. But there was a strong family likeness. The constitution of their minds was remarkably sound. No particular faculty was preëminently developed ; but manly health and vigor were equally diffused through the whole. They were men of letters. Their minds were by nature and by

exercise well fashioned for speculative pursuits. It was by circumstances, rather than by any strong bias of inclination, that they were led to take a prominent part in active life. In active life, however, no men could be more perfectly free from the faults of mere theorists and pedants. No men observed more accurately the signs of the times. No men had a greater practical acquaintance with human nature. Their policy was generally characterized rather by vigilance, by moderation, and by firmness than by invention, or by the spirit of enterprise.

They spoke and wrote in a manner worthy of their excellent sense. Their eloquence was less copious and less ingenious, but far purer and more manly than that of the succeeding generation. It was the eloquence of men who had lived with the first translators of the Bible, and with the authors of the Book of Common Prayer. It was luminous, dignified, solid, and very slightly tainted with affectation which deformed the style of the ablest men of the next age. If, as sometimes chanced, these politicians were under the necessity of taking a part in the theological controversies on which the dearest interests of kingdoms were then staked, they acquitted themselves as if their whole lives had been passed in the Schools and the Convocation.

There was something in the temper of these celebrated men which secured them against the proverbial inconstancy both of the court and of the multitude. No intrigue, no combination of rivals, could deprive them of the confidence of their Sovereign. No parliament attacked their influence. No mob coupled their names with any odious grievance. Their power ended only with their lives. In this respect, their fate presents a most remarkable contrast to that of the enterprising and brilliant politicians of the preceding and of the succeeding generation. Burleigh was minister during

forty years. Sir Nicholas Bacon held the great seal more than twenty years. Sir Walter Mildmay was Chancellor of the Exchequer twenty-three years. Sir Thomas Smith was Secretary of State eighteen years; Sir Francis Walsingham about as long. They all died in office, and in the enjoyment of public respect and royal favor. Far different had been the fate of Wolsey, Cromwell, Norfolk, Somerset and Northumberland. Far different also was the fate of Essex, of Raleigh, and of the still more illustrious man whose life we propose to consider.

The explanation of this circumstance is perhaps contained in the motto which Sir Nicholas Bacon inscribed over the entrance of his hall in Gorhambury, *Mediocria firma*. This maxim was constantly borne in mind by himself and his colleagues. They were more solicitous to lay the foundations of their power deep than to raise the structure to a conspicuous but insecure height. None of them aspired to be sole Minister. None of them provoked envy by an ostentatious display of wealth and influence. None of them affected to outshine the ancient aristocracy of the kingdom. They were free from that childish love of titles which characterized the successful courtiers of the generation which preceded them, and of that which followed them. Only one of those whom we have named was made a peer; and he was content with the lowest degree of the peerage. As to money, none of them could, in that age, justly be considered as rapacious. Some of them would, even in our time, deserve the praise of eminent disinterestedness. Their fidelity to the State was incorruptible. Their private morals were without stain. Their households were sober and well-governed.

Among these statesmen Sir Nicholas Bacon was generally considered as ranking next to Burleigh. He was called by Camden "Sacris

conciliis alterum columen;" and by George Buchanan,

" diu Britannici
Regni secundum columen."

The second wife of Sir Nicholas and mother of Francis Bacon was Anne, one of the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, a man of distinguished learning who had been tutor to Edward the Sixth. Sir Anthony had paid considerable attention to the education of his daughters, and lived to see them all splendidly and happily married. Their classical acquirements made them conspicuous even among the women of fashion of that age. Katherine, who became Lady Killigrew, wrote Latin Hexameters and Pentameters which would appear with credit in the *Musæ Etonenses*. Mildred, the wife of Lord Burleigh, was described by Roger Ascham as the best Greek scholar among the young women of England, Lady Jane Grey always excepted. Anne, the mother of Francis Bacon, was distinguished both as a linguist and as a theologian. She corresponded in Greek with Bishop Jewel, and translated his *Apologia* from the Latin so correctly that neither he nor Archbishop Parker could suggest a single alteration. She also translated a series of sermons on fate and free-will from the Tuscan of Bernardo Ochino. This fact is the more curious, because Ochino was one of that small and audacious band of Italian reformers anathematized alike by Wittenberg, by Geneva, by Zurich, and by Rome, from which the Socinian sect deduces its origin.

Lady Bacon was doubtless a lady of highly cultivated mind after the fashion of her age. But we must not suffer ourselves to be deluded into the belief that she and her sisters were more accomplished women than many who are now living. On this subject there is, we think, much misapprehension. We have often

heard men who wish, as almost all men of sense wish, that women should be highly educated, speak with rapture of the English ladies of the sixteenth century, and lament that they can find no modern damsel resembling those fair pupils of Ascham and Aylmer who compared, over their embroidery, the styles of Isocrates and Lysias, and who, while the horns were sounding and the dogs in full cry, sat in the lonely oriel, with eyes riveted to that immortal page which tells how meekly and bravely the first great martyr of intellectual liberty took the cup from his weeping jailer. But surely these complaints have very little foundation. We would by no means disparage the ladies of the sixteenth century or their pursuits. But we conceive that those who extol them at the expense of the women of our time forget one very obvious and very important circumstance. In the time of Henry the Eighth and Edward the Sixth, a person who did not read Greek and Latin could read nothing, or next to nothing. The Italian was the only modern language which possessed anything that could be called a literature. All the valuable books then extant in all the vernacular dialects of Europe would hardly have filled a single shelf. England did not yet possess Shakspeare's plays and the Fairy Queen, nor France Montaigne's Essays, nor Spain Don Quixote. In looking round a well-furnished library, how many English or French books can we find which were extant when Lady Jane Grey and Queen Elizabeth received their education? Chaucer, Gower, Froissart, Comines, Rabelais, nearly complete the list. It was therefore absolutely necessary that a woman should be uneducated or classically educated. Indeed, without a knowledge of one of the ancient languages no person could then have any clear notion of what was passing in the political, the literary, or the religious world. The Latin was in the sixteenth century all and more

than all that the French was in the eighteenth. It was the language of courts as well as of the schools. It was the language of diplomacy; it was the language of theological and political controversy. Being a fixed language, while the living languages were in a state of fluctuation, and being universally known to the learned and the polite, it was employed by almost every writer who aspired to a wide and durable reputation. A person who was ignorant of it was shut out from all acquaintance, not merely with Cicero and Virgil, not merely with heavy treatises on canon-law and school-divinity, but with the most interesting memoirs, state papers, and pamphlets of his own time, nay even with the most admired poetry and the most popular squibs which appeared on the fleeting topics of the day, with Buchanan's complimentary verses, with Erasmus's dialogues, with Hutten's epistles.

This is no longer the case. All political and religious controversy is now conducted in the modern languages. The ancient tongues are used only in comments on the ancient writers. The great productions of Athenian and Roman genius are indeed still what they were. But though their positive value is unchanged, their relative value, when compared with the whole mass of mental wealth possessed by mankind, has been constantly falling. They were the intellectual all of our ancestors. They are but a part of our treasures. Over what tragedy could Lady Jane Grey have wept, over what comedy could she have smiled, if the ancient dramatists had not been in her library? A modern reader can make shift without *Cædipus* and *Medea*, while he possesses *Othello* and *Hamlet*. If he knows nothing of *Pyrgopolynices* and *Thraso*, he is familiar with *Bobadil*, and *Bessus*, and *Pistol*, and *Parolles*. If he cannot enjoy the delicious irony of *Plato*, he may find some compensation in that of *Pascal*. If he is shut out from *Nepheleococcy*.

gia, he may take refuge in Lilliput. We are guilty, we hope, of no irreverence towards those great nations to which the human race owes art, science, taste, civil and intellectual freedom, when we say, that the stock bequeathed by them to us has been so carefully improved that the accumulated interest now exceeds the principal. We believe that the books which have been written in the languages of western Europe, during the last two hundred and fifty years,—translations from the ancient languages of course included,—are of greater value than all the books which at the beginning of that period were extant in the world. With the modern languages of Europe English women are at least as well acquainted as English men. When, therefore, we compare the acquirements of Lady Jane Grey with those of an accomplished young woman of our own time, we have no hesitation in awarding the superiority to the latter. We hope that our readers will pardon this digression. It is long; but it can hardly be called unseasonable, if it tends to convince them that they are mistaken in thinking that the great-great-grandmothers of their great-great-grandmothers were superior women to their sisters and their wives.

Francis Bacon, the youngest son of Sir Nicholas, was born at York House, his father's residence in the Strand, on the twenty-second of January, 1561. The health of Francis was very delicate; and to this circumstance may be partly attributed that gravity of carriage, and that love of sedentary pursuits, which distinguished him from other boys. Everybody knows how much his premature readiness of wit and sobriety of deportment amused the Queen, and how she used to call him her young Lord Keeper. We are told that, while still a mere child, he stole away from his playfellows to a vault in St. James's Fields, for the purpose of investigating the cause of a singular echo which he had observed there. It is certain

that, at only twelve, he busied himself with very ingenious speculations on the art of legerdemain; a subject which, as Professor Dugald Stewart has most justly observed, merits much more attention from philosophers than it has ever received. These are trifles. But the eminence which Bacon afterwards attained makes them interesting.

In the thirteenth year of his age he was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge. That celebrated school of learning enjoyed the peculiar favor of the Lord Treasurer and the Lord Keeper, and acknowledged the advantages which it derived from their patronage in a public letter which bears date just a month after the admission of Francis Bacon. The master was Whitgift, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, a narrow minded, mean, and tyrannical priest, who gained power by servility and adulation, and employed it in persecuting both those who agreed with Calvin about Church Government, and those who differed from Calvin touching the doctrine of Reprobation. He was now in a chrysalis state, putting off the worm and putting on the dragon-fly, a kind of intermediate grub between sycophant and oppressor. He was indemnifying himself for the court which he found it expedient to pay to the Ministers by exercising much petty tyranny within his own college. It would be unjust, however, to deny him the praise of having rendered about this time one important service to letters. He stood up manfully against those who wished to make Trinity College a mere appendage to Westminster School; and by this act, the only good act, as far as we remember, of his long public life, he saved the noblest place of education in England from the degrading fate of King's College and New College.

It has often been said that Bacon, while still at College, planned that great intellectual rev-

olution with which his name is inseparable connected. The evidence on this subject, however, is hardly sufficient to prove what is in itself so improbable as that any definite scheme of that kind should have been so early formed, even by so powerful and active a mind. But it is certain that, after a residence of three years at Cambridge, Bacon departed, carrying with him a profound contempt for the course of study pursued there, a fixed conviction that the system of academic education in England was radically vicious, a just scorn for the trifles on which the followers of Aristotle had wasted their powers, and no great reverence for Aristotle himself.

In his sixteenth year he visited Paris, and resided there for some time, under the care of Sir Amias Paulet, Elizabeth's minister at the French court, and one of the ablest and most upright of the many valuable servants whom she employed. France was at that time in a deplorable state of agitation. The Huguenots and the Catholics were mustering all their force for the fiercest and most protracted of their many struggles; while the Prince, whose duty it was to protect and to restrain both, had, by his vices and follies, degraded himself so deeply that he had no authority over either. Bacon, however, made a tour through several provinces, and appears to have passed some time at Poitiers. We have abundant proof that during his stay on the Continent he did not neglect literary and scientific pursuits. But his attention seems to have been chiefly directed to statistics and diplomacy. It was at this time that he wrote those Notes on the State of Europe which are printed in his works. He studied the principles of the art of deciphering with great interest, and invented one cipher so ingenious that, many years later, he thought it deserving of a place in the *De Augmentis*. In February, 1580, while engaged in these pursuits, he received intelligence of the almost

sudden death of his father, and instantly returned to England.

His prospects were greatly overcast by this event. He was most desirous to obtain a provision which might enable him to devote himself to literature and politics. He applied to the Government ; and it seems strange that he should have applied in vain. His wishes were moderate. His hereditary claims on the administration were great. He had himself been favorably noticed by the Queen. His uncle was Prime Minister. His own talents were such as any minister might have been eager to enlist in the public service. But his solicitations were unsuccessful. The truth is that the Cecils disliked him, and did all they could decently do to keep him down. It has never been alleged that Bacon had done anything to merit this dislike ; nor is it at all probable that a man whose temper was naturally mild, whose manners were courteous, who, through life, nursed his fortunes with the utmost care, and who was fearful even to a fault of offending the powerful, would have given any just cause of displeasure to a kinsman who had the means of rendering him essential service and of doing him irreparable injury. The real explanation, we believe, is this : Robert Cecil, the Treasurer's second son, was younger by a few months than Bacon. He had been educated with the utmost care, had been initiated while still a boy in the mysteries of diplomacy and court-intrigue, and was just at this time about to be produced on the stage of public life. The wish nearest to Burleigh's heart was that his own greatness might descend to this favorite child. But even Burleigh's fatherly partiality could hardly prevent him from perceiving that Robert, with all his abilities and acquirements, was no match for his cousin Francis. This seems to us the only rational explanation of the Treasurer's conduct. Mr. Montagu is more charitable. He supposes that Burleigh

was influenced merely by affection for his nephew, and was "little disposed to encourage him to rely on others rather than on himself, and to venture on the quicksands of politics, instead of the certain profession of the law." If such were Burleigh's feelings, it seems strange that he should have suffered his son to venture on those quicksands from which he so carefully preserved his nephew. But the truth is that, if Burleigh had been so disposed, he might easily have secured to Bacon a comfortable provision which should have been exposed to no risk. And it is certain that he showed as little disposition to enable his nephew to live by a profession as to enable him to live without a profession. That Bacon himself attributed the conduct of his relatives to jealousy of his superior talents, we have not the smallest doubt. In a letter written many years later to Villiers, he expresses himself thus: "Countenance, encourage, and advance able men in all kinds, degrees, and professions. For in the time of the Cecils, the father and the son, able men were by design and of purpose suppressed."

Whatever Burleigh's motives might be, his purpose was unalterable. The supplications which Francis addressed to his uncle and aunt were earnest, humble, and almost servile. He was the most promising and accomplished young man of his time. His father had been the brother-in-law, the most useful colleague, the nearest friend of the Minister. But all this availed poor Francis nothing. He was forced, much against his will, to betake himself to the study of the law. He was admitted at Gray's Inn, and, during some years he labored there in obscurity.

What the extent of his legal attainments may have been is difficult to say. It was not hard for a man of his powers to acquire that very moderate portion of technical knowledge which, when joined to quickness, tact, wit, ingenuity, eloquence, and knowledge of the world,

is sufficient to raise an advocate to the highest professional eminence. The general opinion appears to have been that which was on one occasion expressed by Elizabeth. "Bacon," said she, "hath a great wit and much learning; but in law showeth to the uttermost of his knowledge, and is not deep." The Cecils, we suspect, did their best to spread this opinion by whispers and insinuations. Coke openly proclaimed it with that rancorous insolence which was habitual to him. No reports are more readily believed than those which disparage genius, and soothe the envy of conscious mediocrity. It must have been inexpressively consoling to a stupid sergeant, the forerunner of him who, a hundred and fifty years later, "shook his head at Murray as a wit," to know that the most profound thinker and the most accomplished orator of the age was very imperfectly acquainted with the law touching *bastardeigné* and *mulier puisné*, and confounded the right of free fishery with that of common of piscary.

It is certain that no man in that age, or indeed during the century and a half which followed, was better acquainted than Bacon with the philosophy of law. His technical knowledge was quite sufficient, with the help of his admirable talents and of his insinuating address, to procure clients. He rose very rapidly into business, and soon entertained hopes of being called within the bar. He applied to Lord Burleigh for that purpose, but received a testy refusal. Of the grounds of that refusal we can, in some measure, judge by Bacon's answer, which is still extant. It seems that the old Lord, whose temper, age and gout had by no means altered for the better, and who loved to mark his dislike of the showy quick-witted young men of the rising generation, took this opportunity to read Francis a very sharp lecture on his vanity and want of respect for his betters. Francis returned a most submissive reply, thanked the Treasurer for the admonition, and

promised to profit by it. Strangers meanwhile were less unjust to the young barrister than his nearest kinsman had been. In his twenty-sixth year he became a bencher of his Inn; and two years later he was appointed Lent reader. At length in 1590, he obtained for the first time some show of favor from the Court.

He was sworn in Queen's Counsel extraordinary. But this mark of honor was not accompanied by any pecuniary emolument. He continued, therefore, to solicit his powerful relatives for some provision which might enable him to live without drudging at his profession. He bore, with a patience and serenity which, we fear, bordered on meanness, the morose humors of his uncle, and the sneering reflections which his cousin cast on speculative men, lost in philosophical dreams, and too wise to be capable of transacting public business. At length the Cecils were generous enough to procure for him the reversion of the Registrarship of the Star Chamber. This was a lucrative place; but, as many years elapsed before it fell in, he was still under the necessity of laboring for his daily bread. In the Parliament which was called in 1593 he sat as member for the county of Middlesex, and soon attained eminence as a debater. It is easy to perceive from the scanty remains of his oratory that the same compactness of expression and richness of fancy which appear in his writings characterized his speeches; and that his extensive acquaintance with literature and history enabled him to entertain his audience with a vast variety of illustrations and allusions which were generally happy and apposite, but which were probably not less pleasing to the taste of that age when they were such as would now be thought childish or pedantic. It is evident also that he was, as indeed might have been expected, perfectly free from those faults which are generally found in an advocate who, after having risen to eminence at the bar, enters the House of Com-

mons ; that it was his habit to deal with every great question, not in small detached portions, but as a whole ; that he refined little, and that his reasonings were those of a capacious rather than a subtle mind. Ben Jonson, a most unexceptional judge, has described Bacon's eloquence in words, which, though often quoted, will bear to be quoted again. "There happened in my time one noble speaker who was full of gravity in his speaking. His language where he could spare or pass by a jest, was nobly censorious. No man ever spoke more neatly, more pressly, more weightily, or suffered less emptiness, less idleness, in what he uttered.

No member of his speech but consisted of his own graces. His hearers could not cough or look aside from him without loss. He commanded where he spoke, and had his judges angry and pleased at his devotion. No man had their affections more in his power. The fear of every man that heard him was lest he should make an end." From the mention which is made of judges, it would seem that Jonson had heard Bacon only at the Bar. Indeed we imagine that the House of Commons was then almost inaccessible to strangers. It is not probable that a man of Bacon's nice observation would speak in Parliament exactly as he spoke in the Court of Queen's Bench. But the graces of manner and language must, to a great extent, have been common between the Queen's Counsel and the Knight of the Shire.

Bacon tried to play a very difficult game in politics. He wished to be at once a favorite at Court and popular with the multitude. If any man could have succeeded in this attempt, a man of talents so rare, of judgment so prematurely ripe, of temper so calm, and of manners so plausible, might have been expected to succeed. Nor indeed did he wholly fail. Once however, he indulged in a burst of patriotism which cost him a long and bitter remorse, and

which he never ventured to repeat. The Court asked for large subsidies and for speedy payment. The remains of Bacon's speech breathed all the spirit of the Long Parliament. "The gentlemen," said he, "must sell their plate, and the farmers their brass pots, ere this will be paid; and for us, we are here to search the wounds of the realm, and not to skim them over. The dangers are these. First, we shall breed discontent and endanger her Majesty's safety, which must consist more in the love of the people than their wealth. Secondly, this being granted in this sort, other princes hereafter will look for the like; so that we shall put an evil precedent on ourselves and our posterity; and in histories, it is to be observed, of all nations the English are not to be subject, base, or taxable." The Queen and her ministers resented this outbreak of public spirit in the highest manner. Indeed, many an honest member of the House of Commons had, for a much smaller matter, been sent to the Tower by the proud and hot-blooded Tudors. The young patriot condescended to make the most abject apologies. He adjured the Lord Treasurer to show some favor to his poor servant and ally. He bemoaned himself to the Lord Keeper, in a letter which may keep in countenance the most unmanly of the epistles which Cicero wrote during his banishment. The lesson was not thrown away. Bacon never offended in the same manner again.

He was now satisfied that he had little to hope from the patronage of those powerful kinsmen whom he had solicited during twelve years with such meek pertinacity; and he began to look towards a different quarter. Among the courtiers of Elizabeth had lately appeared a new favorite, young, noble, wealthy, accomplished, eloquent, brave, generous, aspiring; a favorite who had obtained from the gray-headed Queen such marks of regard as she had scarce vouchsafed to Leicester in the

season of the passions ; who was at once the ornament of the palace and the idol of the city ; who was the common patron of men of letters and of men of the sword ; who was the common refuge of the persecuted Catholic and of the persecuted Puritan. The calm prudence which had enabled Burleigh to shape his course through so many dangers, and the vast experience which he had acquired in dealing with two generations of colleagues and rivals, seemed scarcely sufficient to support him in this new competition ; and Robert Cecil sickened with fear and envy as he contemplated the rising fame and influence of Essex.

The history of the factions which towards the close of the reign of Elizabeth, divided her court and her council, though pregnant with instruction, is by no means interesting or pleasing. Both parties employed the means which are familiar to unscrupulous statesmen ; and neither had, or even pretended to have, any important end in view. The public mind was then reposing from one great effort, and collecting strength for another. That impetuous and appalling rush with which the human intellect had moved forward in the career of truth and liberty, during the fifty years which followed the separation of Luther from the communion of the Church of Rome, was now over. The boundary between Protestantism and Popery had been fixed very nearly where it still remains. England, Scotland, the Northern kingdoms were on one side ; Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Italy, on the other. The line of demarkation ran, as it still runs, through the midst of the Netherlands, of Germany, and of Switzerland, dividing province from province, electorate from electorate, and canton from canton. France might be considered as a debateable land, in which the contest was still undecided. Since that time, the two religions have done little more than maintain their ground. A few occasional incursions have

been made. But the general frontier remains the same. During two hundred and fifty years no great society has risen up like one man, and emancipated itself by one mighty effort from the superstition of ages. This spectacle was common in the sixteenth century. Why has it ceased to be so? Why has it ceased to be so? Why has so violent a movement been followed by so long a repose? The doctrines of the Reformers are not less agreeable to reason or to revolution now than formerly. The public mind is assuredly not less enlightened now than formerly. Why is it that Protestantism, after carrying everything before it in a time of comparatively little knowledge and little freedom, should make no perceptible progress in a reasoning and tolerant age; that the Luthers, the Calvins, the Knoxes, the Zwingles, should have left no successors; that that during two centuries and a half fewer converts should have been brought over from the Church of Rome than at the time of the Reformation were sometimes gained in a year? This has always appeared to us one of the most curious and interesting problems in history. On some future occasion we may perhaps attempt to solve it. At present it is enough to say that at the close of Elizabeth's reign, the Protestant party to borrow the language of the Apocalypse, had left its first love and had ceased to do its first works.

The great struggle of the sixteenth century was over. The great struggle of the seventeenth century had not commenced. The confessors of Mary's reign were dead. The members of the Long Parliament were still in their cradles. The Papists had been deprived of all power in the state. The Puritans had not yet attained any formidable extent of power. True it is that a student, well acquainted with the history of the next generation, can easily discern in the proceedings of the Parliaments of Elizabeth the germ of great

and ever memorable events. But to the eye of a contemporary nothing of this appeared. The two sections of ambitious men who were struggling for power differed from each other on no important public question. Both belonged to the Established Church. Both professed boundless loyalty to the Queen. Both approved the war with Spain. There is not, so far as we are aware, any reason to believe that they entertained different views concerning the succession of the Crown. Certainly neither faction had any great measure of reform in view. Neither attempted to redress any public grievance. The most odious and pernicious grievance under which the nation then suffered was a source of profit to both, and was defended by both with equal zeal. Raleigh held a monopoly of cards, Essex a monopoly of sweet wines. In fact, the only ground of quarrel between the parties was that they could not agree as to their respective shares of power and patronage.

Nothing in the political conduct of Essex entitles him to esteem; and the pity with which we regard his early and terrible end is diminished by the consideration, that he put to hazard the lives and fortunes of his most attached friends, and endeavored to throw the whole country into confusion, for objects purely personal. Still, it is impossible not to be deeply interested for a man so brave, high-spirited and generous; for a man who, while he conducted himself towards his sovereign with a boldness such as was then found in no other subject, conducted himself towards his dependents with a delicacy such as has rarely been found in any other patron. Unlike the vulgar herd of benefactors, he desired to inspire, not gratitude, but affection. He tried to make those whom he befriended feel towards him as towards an equal. His mind, ardent, susceptible, naturally disposed to admiration of all that is great and beautiful, was

fascinated by the genius and accomplishments of Bacon. A close friendship was soon formed between them, a friendship destined to have a dark, a mournful, a shameful end.

In 1594 the office of Attorney-General became vacant, and Bacon hoped to obtain it. Essex made his friend's cause his own, sued, expostulated, promised, threatened, but all in vain. It is probable that the dislike felt by the Cecils for Bacon had been increased by the connection which he had lately formed with the Earl. Robert was then on the point of being made Secretary of State. He happened one day to be in the same coach with Essex, and a remarkable conversation took place between them. "My Lord," said Sir Robert, "the Queen has determined to appoint an Attorney-General without more delay. I pray your Lordship to let me know whom you will favor." "I wonder at your question," replied the Earl. "You cannot but know that resolutely, against all the world, I stand for your cousin, Francis Bacon." "Good Lord!" cried Cecil, unable to bridle his temper, "I wonder your Lordship should spend your strength on so unlikely a matter. Can you name one precedent of so raw a youth promoted to so great a place?" This objection came with a singularly bad grace from a man who, though younger than Bacon, was in daily expectation of being made Secretary of State. The blot was too obvious to be missed by Essex, who seldom forbore to speak his mind. "I have made no search," said he, "for precedents of young men who have filled the office of Attorney-General. But I could name to you, Sir Robert, a man younger than Francis, less learned, and equally inexperienced, who is suing and striving with all his might for an office of far greater weight." Sir Robert had nothing to say but that he thought his own abilities equal to the place which he hoped to obtain, and that his father's long

services deserved such a mark of gratitude from the Queen ; as if his abilities were comparable to his cousin's, or as if Sir Nicholas Bacon had done no service to the State. Cecil then hinted that, if Bacon would be satisfied with the Solicitorship, that might be of easier digestion to the Queen. "Digest me no digestions," said the generous and ardent Earl. "The Attorneyship for Francis is that I must have ; and in that I will spend all my power, might, authority, and amity, and with tooth and nail procure the same for him against whomsoever ; and whosoever getteth this office out of my hands for any other, before he have it, it shall cost him the coming by. And this be you assured of, Sir Robert, for now I fully declare myself ; and for my own part, Sir Robert, I think strange both of my Lord Treasurer and you, that can have the mind to seek the preference of a stranger before so near a kinsman ; for if you weigh in a balance the parts every way of his competitor and him, only excepting five poor years of admitting to a house of court before Francis, you shall find in all other respects whatsoever no comparison between them."

When the office of Attorney-General was filled up, the Earl pressed the Queen to make Bacon Solicitor-General and, on this occasion, the old Lord Treasurer professed himself not unfavorable to his nephew's pretensions. But, after a contest which lasted more than a year and a half, and in which Essex, to use his own words, "spent all his power, might, authority, and amity," the place was given to another. Essex felt this disappointment keenly, but found consolation in the most munificent and delicate liberality. He presented Bacon with an estate worth near two thousand pounds, situated at Twickenham ; and this, as Bacon owned many years after, "with so kind and noble circumstances as the manner was worth more than the matter."

It was soon after these events that Bacon first appeared before the public as a writer. Early in 1597 he published a small volume of Essays, which was afterwards enlarged by successive additions to many times its original bulk. This little work was, as it well deserved to be, exceedingly popular. It was reprinted in a few months, it was translated into Latin, French, and Italian; and it seems to have at once established the literary reputation of its author. But though Bacon's reputation rose, his fortunes were still depressed. He was in great pecuniary difficulties; and on one occasion, was arrested in the street at the suit of a goldsmith for a debt of three hundred pounds, and was carried to a spunging-house in Coleman Street.

The kindness of Essex was in the mean time indefatigable. In 1596 he sailed on his memorable expedition to the coast of Spain. At the very moment of his embarkation, he wrote to several of his friends, commending to them, during his own absence, the interests of Bacon. He returned, after performing the most brilliant military exploit that was achieved on the Continent by English arms during the long interval which elapsed between the battle of Agincourt and that of Blenheim. His valor, his talents, his humane and generous disposition, had made him the idol of his countrymen, and had extorted praise from the enemies whom he had conquered.* He had always been proud and headstrong; and his splendid success seems to have rendered his faults more offensive than ever. But to his friend Francis he was still the same. Bacon had some thoughts of making his fortune by marriage, and had begun to pay court to a widow of the name of Hatton. The eccentric manners and violent temper of this woman made her a disgrace and a torment to her connections. But Bacon was not aware

* See Cervantes's *Novela de la Española Inglesa*.

of her faults, or was disposed to overlook them for the sake of her ample fortune. Essex pleaded his friend's cause with his usual ardor. The letters which the Earl addressed to Lady Hatton and to her mother are still extant, and are highly honorable to him. "If," he wrote, "she were my sister or my daughter, I protest I would as confidently resolve to further it as I now persuade you;" and again, "if my faith be anything, I protest, if I had one as near me as she is to you, I had rather match her with him, than with men of far greater titles." The suit, happily for Bacon, was unsuccessful. The lady indeed was kind to him in more ways than one. She rejected him; and she accepted his enemy. She married that narrow-minded, bad-hearted pedant, Sir Edward Coke, and did her best to make him as miserable as he deserved to be.

The fortunes of Essex had now reached their height, and began to decline. He possessed indeed all the qualities which raise men to greatness rapidly. But he had neither the virtues nor the vices which enable men to retain greatness long. His frankness, his keen sensibility to insult and injustice were by no means agreeable to a sovereign naturally impatient of opposition, and accustomed, during forty-years, to the most extravagant flattery and the most abject submission. The daring and contemptuous manner in which he bade defiance to his enemies excited their deadly hatred. His administration in Ireland was unfortunate, and in many respects highly blamable. Though his brilliant courage and his impetuous activity fitted him admirably for such enterprises as that of Cadiz, he did not possess the caution, patience, and resolution necessary for the conduct of a protracted war, in which difficulties were to be gradually surmounted, in which much discomfort was to be endured and in which few splendid exploits could be achieved. For the civil duties of his high place he was still less quali-

fied. Though eloquent and accomplished, he was in no sense a statesman. The multitude indeed still continued to regard even his faults with fondness. But the Court had ceased to give him credit, even for the merit which he really possessed. The person on whom, during the decline of his influence, he chiefly depended, to whom he confided his perplexities, whose advice he solicited, whose intercession he employed, was his friend Bacon. The lamentable truth must be told. This friend, so loved, so trusted, bore a principal part in ruining the Earl's fortunes, in shedding his blood, and in blackening his memory.

But let us be just to Bacon. We believe that, to the last, he had no wish to injure Essex. Nay, we believe that he sincerely exerted himself to serve Essex, as long as he thought he could serve Essex without injuring himself. The advice which he gave to his noble benefactor was generally most judicious. He did all in his power to dissuade the Earl from accepting the Government of Ireland. "For," says he, "I did as plainly see his overthrow chained as it were by destiny to that journey, as it is possible for a man to ground a judgment upon future contingents." The prediction was accomplished. Essex returned in disgrace. Bacon attempted to mediate between his friend and the Queen; and, we believe, honestly employed all his address for that purpose. But the task which he had undertaken was too difficult, delicate, and perilous even for so wary and dexterous an agent. He had to manage two spirits equally proud, resentful, and ungovernable. At Essex House he had to calm the rage of a young hero incensed by multiplied wrongs and humiliations, and then to pass to Whitehall for the purpose of soothing the peevishness of a sovereign, whose temper, never very gentle, had been rendered morbidly irritable by age, by declining health, and by the long habit of listening

to flattery and exacting implicit obedience. It is hard to serve two masters. Situated as Bacon was, it was scarcely possible for him to shape his course so as not to give one or both of his employers reason to complain. For a time he acted as fairly as, in circumstances so embarrassing, could reasonably be expected. At length he found that, while he was trying to prop the fortunes of another, he was in danger of shaking his own. He had disobliterated both the parties whom he wished to reconcile. Essex thought him wanting in duty as a friend : Elizabeth thought him wanting in duty as a subject. The Earl looked on him as a spy of the Queen : the Queen as a creature of the Earl. The reconciliation which he had labored to effect appeared utterly hopeless. A thousand signs, legible to eyes far less keen than his, announced that the fall of his patron was at hand. He shaped his course accordingly. When Essex was brought before the council to answer for his conduct in Ireland, Bacon, after a faint attempt to excuse himself from taking part against his friend, submitted himself to the Queen's pleasure, and appeared at the bar in support of the charges. But a darker scene was behind. The unhappy young nobleman, made reckless by despair, ventured on a rash and criminal enterprise, which rendered him liable to the highest penalties of the law. What course was Bacon to take? This was one of those conjectures which show what men are. To a high-minded man, wealth, power, court-favor, even personal safety, would have appeared of no account, when opposed to friendship, gratitude, and honor. Such a man would have stood by the side of Essex at the trial, would have "spent all his power, might, authority, and amity" in soliciting a mitigation, of the sentence, would have been a daily visitor at the cell, would have received the last injunctions and the last embrace on the scaffold, would have employed all the powers of his intellect to guard from

insult the fame of his generous though erring friend. An ordinary man would neither have incurred the danger of succoring Essex, nor the disgrace of assailing him. Bacon did not even preserve neutrality. He appeared as counsel for the prosecution. In that situation he did not confine himself to what would have been amply sufficient to procure a verdict. He employed all his wit, his rhetoric, and his learning, not to insure a conviction,—but the circumstances were such that a conviction was inevitable,—but to deprive the unhappy prisoner of all those excuses which, though legally of no value, yet tended to diminish the moral guilt of the crime, and which, therefore, though they could not justify the peers in pronouncing an acquittal, might incline the Queen to grant a pardon. The Earl urged as a palliation of his frantic acts that he was surrounded by powerful and inveterate enemies, that they had ruined his fortunes, that they sought his life, and that their persecutions had driven him to despair. This was true; and Bacon well knew it to be true. But he affected to treat it as an idle pretence. He compared Essex to Pisistratus who, by pretending to be in imminent danger of assassination, and by exhibiting self-inflicted wounds, succeeded in establishing tyranny at Athens. This was too much for the prisoner to bear. He interrupted his ungrateful friend by calling on him to quit the part of an advocate, to come forward as a witness, and to tell the Lords whether, in old times, he Francis Bacon, had not under his own hand, repeatedly asserted the truth of what he now represented as idle pretexts. It is painful to go on with this lamentable story. Bacon returned a shuffling answer to the Earl's question, and, as if the allusion to Pisistratus were not sufficiently offensive, made another allusion still more unjustifiable. He compared Essex to Henry Duke of Guise, and the rash attempt in the city to the day of the barricades at Paris. Why

Bacon had recourse to such a topic it is difficult to say. It was quite unnecessary for the purpose of obtaining a verdict. It was certain to produce a strong impression on the mind of the haughty and jealous princess on whose pleasure the Earl's fate depended. The faintest allusion to the degrading tutelage in which the last Valois had been held by the House of Lorraine was sufficient to harden her heart against a man who in rank, in military reputation, in popularity among the citizens of the capital, bore some resemblance to the captain of the League.

Essex was convicted. Bacon made no effort to save him, though the Queen's feelings were such that he might have pleaded his benefactor's cause, possibly with success, certainly without any serious danger to himself. The unhappy nobleman was executed. His fate excited strong perhaps unreasonable feelings of compassion and indignation. The Queen was received by the citizens of London with gloomy looks and faint acclamations. She thought it expedient to publish a vindication of her late proceedings. The faithless friend who had assisted in taking the Earl's life was now employed to murder the Earl's fame. The Queen had seen some of Bacon's writings, and had been pleased with them. He was accordingly selected to write "A Declaration of the Practices and Treasons attempted and committed by Robert Earl of Essex," which was printed by authority. In the succeeding reign, Bacon had not a word to say in defence of this performance, a performance abounding in expressions which no generous enemy would have employed respecting a man who had so dearly expiated his offences. His only excuse was, that he wrote it by command, that he considered himself as a mere secretary, that he had particular instructions as to the way in which he was to treat every part of the subject,

and that, in fact, he had furnished only the arrangement and the style.

We regret to say that the whole conduct of Bacon through the course of these transactions appears to Mr. Montagu not merely excusable, but deserving of high admiration. The integrity and benevolence of this gentleman are so well known that our readers will probably be at a loss to conceive by what steps he can have arrived at so extraordinary a conclusion; and we are half afraid that they will suspect us of practising some artifice upon them when we report the principal arguments which he employs.

In order to get rid of the charge of ingratitude, Mr. Montagu attempts to show that Bacon lay under greater obligations to the Queen than to Essex. What these obligations were it is not easy to discover. The situation of Queen's Counsel, and a remote reversion, were surely favors very far below Bacon's personal and hereditary claims. They were favors which had not cost the Queen a groat, nor had they put a groat into Bacon's purse. It was necessary to rest Elizabeth's claims to gratitude on some other ground; and this Mr. Montagu felt. "What perhaps was her greatest kindness," says he, "instead of having hastily advanced Bacon, she had, with a continuance of her friendship, made him bear the yoke in his youth. Such were his obligations to Elizabeth." Such indeed they were. Being the son of one of her oldest and most faithful ministers, being himself the ablest and most accomplished young man of his time, he had been condemned by her to drudgery, to obscurity, to poverty. She had depreciated his acquirements. She had checked him in the most imperious manner, when in Parliament he ventured to act an independent part. She had refused to him the professional advancement to which he had a just claim. To her it was owing that, while younger men, not

superior to him in extraction, and far inferior to him in every kind of personal merit, were filling the highest offices of the state, adding manor to manor, rearing palace after palace, he was lying at a spunging-house for a debt of three hundred pounds. Assuredly if Bacon owed gratitude to Elizabeth he owed none to Essex. If the Queen really was his best friend, the Earl was his worst enemy. We wonder that Mr. Montagu did not press this argument a little further. He might have maintained that Bacon was excusable in revenging himself on a man who had attempted to rescue his youth from the salutary yoke imposed on it by the Queen, who had wished to advance him hastily, who, not content with attempting to inflict the Attorney-Generalship upon him, had been so cruel as to present him with a landed estate.

Again, we can hardly think Mr. Montagu serious when he tells us that Bacon was bound for the sake of the public not to destroy his own hopes of advancement and that he took part against Essex from a wish to obtain power which might enable him to be useful to his country. We really do not know how to refute such arguments except by stating them. Nothing is impossible which does not involve a contradiction. It is barely possible that Bacon's motives for acting as he did on this occasion may have been gratitude to the Queen for keeping him poor, and a desire to benefit his fellow-creatures in some high situation. And there is a possibility that Bonner may have been a good Protestant who, being convinced that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the Church, heroically went through all the drudgery and infamy of persecution, in order that he might inspire the English people with an intense and lasting hatred of Popery. There is a possibility that Jeffreys may have been an ardent lover of liberty, and that he may have beheaded Algernon Sydney, and burned

Elizabeth Gaunt, only in order to produce a reaction which might lead to the limitation of the prerogative. There is a possibility that Thurtell may have killed Weare only in order to give the youth of England an impressive warning against gaming and bad company. There is a possibility that Fauntleroy may have forged powers of attorney, only in order that his fate might turn the attention of the public to the defects of the penal law. These things, we say, are possible. But they are so extravagantly improbable that a man who should act on such suppositions would be fit only for Saint Luke's. And we do not see why suppositions on which no rational man would act in ordinary life should be admitted into history.

Mr. Montagu's notion that Bacon desired power only in order to do good to mankind appears somewhat strange to us, when we consider how Bacon afterwards used power, and how he lost it. Surely the service which he rendered to mankind by taking Lady Wharton's broad pieces and Sir John Kennedy's cabinet was not of such vast importance as to sanctify all the means which might conduce to that end. If the case were fairly stated, it would, we much fear, stand thus: Bacon was a servile advocate that he might be a corrupt judge.

Mr. Montagu maintains that none but the ignorant and unreflecting can think Bacon censurable for anything that he did as counsel for the Crown, and that no advocate can justifiably use any discretion as to the party for whom he appears. We will not at present inquire whether the doctrine which is held on this subject by English lawyers be or be not agreeable to reason and morality; whether it be right that a man should, with a wig on his head, and a band round his neck, do for a guinea what, without those appendages, he would think it wicked and infamous to do for an empire; whether it be right that, not merely

believing but knowing a statement to be true, he should do all that can be done by sophistry, by rhetoric, by solemn asseveration, by indignant exclamation, by gesture, by play of features, by terrifying one honest witness, by perplexing another, to cause a jury to think that statement false. It is not necessary on the present occasion to decide these questions. The professional rules, be they good or bad, are rules to which many wise and virtuous men have conformed, and are daily conforming. If, therefore, Bacon did no more than these rules required of him, we shall readily admit that he was blameless, or, at least, excusable. But we conceive that his conduct was not justifiable, according to any professional rules that now exist, or that ever existed in England. It has always been held that, in criminal cases in which the prisoner was denied the help of counsel, and, above all, in capital cases, advocates were both entitled and bound to exercise a discretion. It is true that, after the Revolution, when the Parliament began to make inquisition for the innocent blood which had been shed by the last Stuarts, a feeble attempt was made to defend the lawyers who had been accomplices in the murder of Sir Thomas Armstrong, on the ground that they had only acted professionally. The wretched sophism was silenced by the execrations of the House of Commons. "Things will never be well done," said Mr. Foley, "till some of that profession be made examples." "We have a new sort of monsters in the world," said the younger Hampden, "haranguing a man to death. These I call blood-hounds. Sawyer is very criminal and guilty of this murder." "I speak to discharge my conscience," said Mr. Garroway. "I will not have the blood of this man at my door. Sawyer demanded judgment against him and execution. I believe him guilty of the death of this man. Do what you will with him." "If the pro-

fession of the law," said the elder Hampden, "gives a man authority to murder at this rate, it is the interest of all men to rise and exterminate that profession." Nor was this language held only by unlearned country gentlemen. Sir William Williams, one of the ablest and most unscrupulous lawyers of the age, took the same view of the case. He had not hesitated, he said, to take part in the prosecution of the Bishops, because they were allowed counsel. But he maintained that, where the prisoner was not allowed counsel, the Counsel for the Crown was bound to exercise a discretion, and that every lawyer who neglected this distinction was a betrayer of the law. But it is unnecessary to cite authority. It is known to everybody who has ever looked into a court of quarter-sessions that lawyers do exercise a discretion in criminal cases; and it is plain to every man of common sense that, if they did not exercise such a discretion, they would be a more hateful body of men than those bravoës who used to hire out their stilettoes in Italy.

Bacon appeared against a man who was indeed guilty of a great offence, but who had been his benefactor and friend. He did more than this. Nay, he did more than a person who had never seen Essex would have been justified in doing. He employed all the art of an advocate in order to make the prisoner's conduct appear more inexcusable and more dangerous to the state than it really had been. All that professional duty could, in any case, have required of him would have been to conduct the cause so as to insure a conviction. But from the nature of the circumstances there could not be the smallest doubt that the Earl would be found guilty. The character of the crime was unequivocal. It had been committed recently, in broad daylight, in the streets of the capital, in the presence of thousands. If ever there was an occasion on which an

advocate had no temptation to resort to extraneous topics, for the purpose of blinding the judgment and inflaming the passions of a tribunal, this was that occasion. Why then resort to arguments which, while they could add nothing to the strength of the case, considered in a legal point of view, tended to aggravate the moral guilt of the fatal enterprise, and to excite fear and resentment in that quarter from which alone the Earl could now expect mercy? Why remind the audience of the arts of the ancient tyrants? Why deny, what everybody knew to be the truth, that a powerful faction at court had long sought to effect the ruin of the prisoner? Why, above all, institute a parallel between the unhappy culprit and the most wicked and most successful rebel of the age? Was it absolutely impossible to do all that professional duty required without reminding a jealous sovereign of the League, of the barricades, and of all the humiliations which a too powerful subject had heaped on Henry the Third?

But if we admit the plea which Mr. Montagu urges in defence of what Bacon did as an advocate, what shall we say of the "Declaration of the Treasons of Robert Earl of Essex"? Here at least there was no pretence of professional obligation. Even those who may think it the duty of a lawyer to hang, draw, and quarter his benefactors, for a proper consideration, will hardly say that it is his duty to write abusive pamphlets against them, after they are in their graves. Bacon excused himself by saying that he was not answerable for the matter of the book, and that he furnished only the language. But why did he endow such purposes with words? Could no hack writer, without virtue or shame, be found to exaggerate the errors, already so dearly expiated, of a gentle and noble spirit? Every age produces those links between the man and the baboon. Every age is fertile of Old-

mixons, of Kenricks, and of Antony Pasquins. But was it for Bacon so to prostitute his intellect? Could he not feel that, while he rounded and pointed some period dictated by the envy of Cecil, or gave a plausible form to some slander invited by the dastardly malignity of Cobham, he was not sinning merely against his friend's honor and his own? Could he not feel that letters, eloquence, philosophy, were all degraded in his degradation?

The real explanation of all this is perfectly obvious; and nothing but a partiality amounting to a ruling passion could cause anybody to miss it. The moral qualities of Bacon were not of a high order. We do not say that he was a bad man. He was not inhuman or tyrannical. He bore with meekness his high civil honors, and the far higher honors gained by his intellect. He was very seldom, if ever, provoked into treating any person with malignity and insolence. No man more readily held up the left cheek to those who had smitten the right. No man was more expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath. He was never charged, by any accuser entitled to the smallest credit, with licentious habits. His even temper, his flowing courtesy, the general respectability of his demeanor, made a favorable impression on those who saw him in situations which do not severely try the principles. His faults were—we write it with pain—coldness of heart and meanness of spirit. He seems to have been incapable of feeling strong affection, of facing great dangers, of making great sacrifices. His desires were set on things below. Wealth, precedence, titles, patronage, the mace, the seals, the coronet, large houses, fair gardens, rich manors, massive services of plate, gay hangings, curious cabinets, had as great attractions for him as for any of the courtiers who dropped on their knees in the dirt when Elizabeth passed by, and then hastened home to write to the King of Scots that her

Grace seemed to be breaking fast. For these objects he had stooped to everything and endured everything. For these he had sued in the humblest manner, and, when unjustly and ungraciously repulsed, had thanked those who had repulsed him, and had begun to sue again. For these objects, as soon as he found that the smallest show of independence in Parliament was offensive to the Queen, he had abased himself to the dust before her, and implored forgiveness in terms better suited to a convicted thief than to a knight of the shire. For these he joined, and for these he forsook, Lord Essex. He continued to plead his patron's cause with the Queen as long as he thought that by pleading that cause he might serve himself. Nay, he went further; for his feelings, though not warm, were kind; he pleaded that cause as long as he thought that he could plead it without injury to himself. But when it became evident that Essex was going headlong to his ruin, Bacon began to tremble for his own fortunes. What he had to fear would not indeed have been very alarming to a man of lofty character. It was not death. It was not imprisonment. It was the loss of court favor. It was the being left behind by others in the career of ambition. It was the having leisure to finish the *Instauratio Magna*. The Queen looked coldly on him. The courtiers began to consider him as a marked man. He determined to change his line of conduct, and to proceed in a new course with so much vigor as to make up for lost time. When once he had determined to act against his friend, knowing himself to be suspected, he acted with more zeal than would have been necessary or justifiable if he had been employed against a stranger. He exerted his professional talents to shed the Earl's blood, and his literary talents to blacken the Earl's memory.

It is certain that his conduct excited at the time great and general disapprobation. While

Elizabeth lived, indeed, this disapprobation, though deeply felt, was not loudly expressed. But a great change was at hand. The health of the Queen had long been decaying; and the operation of age and disease was now assisted by acute mental suffering. The pitiable melancholy of her last days has generally been ascribed to her fond regret for Essex. But we are disposed to attribute her dejection partly to physical causes, and partly to the conduct of her courtiers and ministers. They did all in their power to conceal from her the intrigues which they were carrying on at the Court of Scotland. But her keen sagacity was not to be so deceived. She did not know the whole. But she knew she was surrounded by men who were impatient for that new world which was to begin at her death, who had never been attached to her by affection, and who were now but very slightly attached to her by interest. Prostration and flattery could not conceal from her the cruel truth, that those whom she had trusted and promoted had never loved her, and were fast ceasing to fear her. Unable to avenge herself, and too proud to complain, she suffered sorrow and resentment to prey on her heart, till, after a long career of power, prosperity, and glory, she died sick and weary of the world.

James mounted the throne; and Bacon employed all his address to obtain for himself a share of the favor of his new master. This was no difficult task. The faults of James, both as a man and as a prince, were numerous; but insensibility to the claims of genius and learning was not among them. He was indeed made up of two men, a witty, well-read scholar, who wrote, disputed and harangued, and a nervous, drivelling idiot, who acted. If he had been a Canon of Christ Church, or a Prebendary of Westminster, it is not improbable that he would have left a highly respectable name to posterity; that he would have distinguished

himself among the translators of the Bible, and among the Divines who attended the Synod of Dort; and that he would have been regarded by the literary world as no contemptible rival of Vossius and Casaubon. But fortune placed him in a situation in which his weaknesses covered him with disgrace, and in which his accomplishments brought him no honor. In a college, much eccentricity and childishness would have been readily pardoned in so learned a man. But all that learning could do for him on the throne was to make people think him a pedant as well as a fool.

Bacon was favorably received at Court; and soon found that his chance of promotion was not diminished by the death of the Queen. He was solicitous to be knighted, for two reasons which are somewhat amusing. The King had already dubbed half London, and Bacon found himself the only untitled person in his mess at Gray's Inn. This was not very agreeable to him. He had also, to quote his own words, "found an Alderman's daughter, a handsome maiden, to his liking." On both these grounds, he begged his cousin Robert Cecil, "if it might please his good Lordship," to use his interest in his behalf. The application was successful. Bacon was one of three hundred gentlemen who, on the coronation-day, received the honor, if it is to be so called, of knighthood. The handsome maiden, a daughter of Alderman Barnham, soon after consented to become Sir Francis's lady.

The death of Elizabeth, though on the whole it improved Bacon's prospects, was in one respect an unfortunate event for him. The new King had always felt kindly towards Lord Essex, and, as soon as he came to the throne, began to show favor to the house of Devereux, and to those who had stood by that house in its adversity. Everybody was now at liberty to speak out respecting those lamentable events in which Bacon had borne so large a share,

Elizabeth was scarcely cold when the public feeling began to manifest itself by marks of respect towards Lord Southampton. That accomplished nobleman, who will be remembered to the latest ages as the generous and discerning patron of Shakspeare, was held in honor by his contemporaries chiefly on account of the devoted affection which he had borne to Essex. He had been tried and convicted together with his friend ; but the Queen had spared his life, and, at the time of her death, he was still a prisoner. A crowd of visitors hastened to the Tower to congratulate him on his approaching deliverance. With that crowd Bacon could not venture to mingle. The multitude loudly condemned him ; and his conscience told him that the multitude had but too much reason. He excused himself to Southampton by letter in terms which, if he had, as Mr. Montagu conceives, done only what as a subject and an advocate he was bound to do, must be considered as shamefully servile. He owns his fear that his attendance would give offence, and that his professions of regard would obtain no credit. " Yet," says he, " it is as true as a thing that God knoweth, that this great change hath wrought in me no other change towards your Lordship than this, that I may safely be that to you now which I was truly before."

How Southampton received these apologies we are not informed. But it is certain that the general opinion was pronounced against Bacon in a manner not to be misunderstood. Soon after his marriage he put forth a defence of his conduct, in the form of a letter to the Earl of Devon. This tract seems to us to prove only the exceeding badness of a cause for which such talents could do so little.

It is not probable that Bacon's Defence had much effect on his contemporaries. But the unfavorable impression which his conduct had made appears to have been gradually effaced. Indeed it must be some very peculiar cause

that can make a man like him long unpopular. His talents secured him from contempt, his temper and his manners from hatred. There is scarcely any story so black that it may not be got over by a man of great abilities, whose abilities are united with caution, good-humor, patience, and affability, who pays daily sacrifice to Nemesis, who is a delightful companion, a serviceable though not an ardent friend, and a dangerous yet a placable enemy. Waller in the next generation was an eminent instance of this. Indeed Waller had much more than may at first sight appear in common with Bacon. To the higher intellectual qualities of the great English philosopher, to the genius which has made an immortal epoch in the history of science, Waller had indeed no pretensions. But the mind of Waller, as far as it extended, coincided with that of Bacon, and might, so to speak, have been cut out of that of Bacon. In the qualities which make a man an object of interest and veneration to posterity, they cannot be compared together. But in the qualities by which chiefly a man is known to his contemporaries there was a striking similarity between them. Considered as men of the world, as courtiers, as politicians, as associates, as allies, as enemies, they had nearly the same merits, and the same defects. They were not malignant. They were not tyrannical. But they wanted warmth of affection and elevation of sentiment. There were many things which they loved better than virtue, and which they feared more than guilt. Yet, even after they had stooped to acts of which it is impossible to read the account in the most partial narratives without strong disapprobation and contempt, the public still continued to regard them with a feeling not easily to be distinguished from esteem. The hyperbole of Juliet seemed to be verified with respect to them. "Upon their brows shame was ashamed to sit." Everybody seemed as desirous to throw a veil over

their misconduct as if it had been his own. Clarendon, who felt, and who had reason to feel, strong personal dislike towards Waller; speaks of him thus: "There needs no more to be said to extol the excellence and power of his wit and pleasantness of his conversation, than that it was of magnitude enough to cover a world of very great faults, that is, so to cover them that they were not taken notice of to his reproach, viz. a narrowness in his nature to the lowest degree, an abjectness and want of courage to support him in any virtuous undertaking, an insinuation and servile flattery to the height the vainest and most imperious nature could be contented with.* * * It had power to reconcile him to those whom he had most offended and provoked, and continued to his age with that rare felicity, that his company was acceptable where his spirit was odious, and he was at least pitied where he was most detested." Much of this, with some softening, might, we fear, be applied to Bacon. The influence of Waller's talents, manners and accomplishments, died with him; and the world has pronounced an unbiassed sentence on his character. A few flowing lines are not bribe sufficient to pervert the judgment of posterity. But the influence of Bacon is felt and will long be felt over the whole civilized world. Leniently as he was treated by his contemporaries, posterity has treated him more leniently still. Turn where we may, the trophies of that mighty intellect are full in view. We are judging Manlius in sight of the Capitol.

Under the reign of James, Bacon grew rapidly in fortune and favor. In 1604 he was appointed King's Counsel, with a fee of forty pounds a year; and a pension of sixty pounds a year was settled upon him. In 1607 he became Solicitor-General, in 1612 Attorney-General. He continued to distinguish himself in Parliament, particularly by his exertions in favor of one excellent measure on which the

King's heart was set, the union of England and Scotland. It was not difficult for such an intellect to discover many irresistible arguments in favor of such a scheme. He conducted the great case of the *Post Nati* in the Exchequer Chamber; and the decision of the judges, a decision the legality of which may be questioned, but the beneficial effect of which must be acknowledged, was in a great measure attributed to his dexterous management. While actively engaged in the House of Commons and in the courts of law, he still found leisure for letters and philosophy. The noble treatise on the "Advancement of Learning," which at a later period was expanded into the *De Augmentis*, appeared in 1605. The "Wisdom of the Ancients," a work which, if it had proceeded from any other writer, would have been considered as a masterpiece of wit and learning, but which adds little to the fame of Bacon, was printed in 1609. In the meantime the *Novum Organum* was slowly proceeding. Several distinguished men of learning had been permitted to see sketches or detached portions of that extraordinary book; and, though they were not generally disposed to admit the soundness of the author's views, they spoke with the greatest admiration of his genius. Sir Thomas Bodley, the founder of one of the most magnificent of English libraries, was among those stubborn Conservatives who considered the hopes with which Bacon looked forward to the future destinies of the human race as utterly chimerical, and who regarded with distrust and aversion the innovating spirit of the new schismatics in philosophy. Yet even Bodley, after perusing the *Cogitata et Visa*, one of the most precious of those scattered leaves out of which the great oracular volume was afterwards made up, acknowledges that in "those very points, and in all proposals and plots in that book, Bacon showed himself a master-workman;" and that "it could not be gainsaid but all the treatises

ever did abound with choice conceits of the present state of learning, and with worthy contemplation of the means to procure it." In 1612, a new edition of the "Essays" appeared, with additions surpassing the original collection both in bulk and quality. Nor did these pursuits distract Bacon's attention from a work the most arduous, the most glorious, and the most useful that even his mighty powers could have achieved, "the reducing and compiling," to use his own phrase, "of the laws of England."

Unhappily he was at that time employed in perverting those laws to the vilest purposes of tyranny. When Oliver St. John was brought before the Star Chamber for maintaining that the King had no right to levy Benevolences, and was for his manly and constitutional conduct sentenced to imprisonment during the royal pleasure and to a fine of five thousand pounds, Bacon appeared as counsel for the prosecution. About the same time he was deeply engaged in a still more disgraceful transaction. An aged clergyman, of the name of Peacham, was accused of treason on account of some passages of a sermon which was found in his study. The sermon, whether written by him or not, had never been preached. It did not appear that he had any intention of preaching it. The most servile lawyers of those servile times were forced to admit that there were great difficulties both as to the facts and as to the law. Bacon was employed to remove those difficulties. He was employed to settle the question of law by tampering with the judges, and the question of fact by torturing the prisoner.

Three judges of the Court of King's Bench were tractable. But Coke was made of different stuff. Pedant, bigot, and brute as he was, he had qualities which bore a strong, though a very disagreeable resemblance to some of the highest virtues which a public man can possess.

He was an exception to a maxim which we believe to be generally true, that those who trample on the helpless are disposed to cringe to the powerful. He behaved with gross rudeness to his juniors at the bar, and with execrable cruelty to prisoners on trial for their lives. But he stood up manfully against the King's favorites. No man of that age appeared to so little advantage when he was opposed to an inferior, and was in the wrong. But, on the other hand, it is but fair to admit that no man of that age made so creditable a figure when he was opposed to a superior, and happened to be in the right. On such occasions, his half-suppressed insolence and his impracticable obstinacy had a respectable and interesting appearance, when compared with the abject servility of the bar and of the bench. On the present occasion he was stubborn and surly. He declared that it was a new and a highly improper practice in the judges to confer with a law-officer of the crown about capital cases which they were afterwards to try; and for some time he resolutely kept aloof. But Bacon was equally artful and persevering. "I am not wholly out of hope," said he in a letter to the King, "that my Lord Coke himself, when I have in some dark manner put him in doubt that he shall be left alone, will not be singular." After some time Bacon's dexterity was successful; and Coke, sullenly and reluctantly, followed the example of his brethren. But in order to convict Peacham it was necessary to find facts as well as law. Accordingly, this wretched old man was put to the rack, and, while undergoing the horrible infliction, was examined by Bacon, but in vain. No confession could be wrung out of him; and Bacon wrote to the King, complaining that Peacham had a dumb devil. At length the trial came on. A conviction was obtained; but the charges were so obviously futile, that the government could not, for very shame, carry the sentence into execu-

tion; and Peacham was suffered to languish away the short remainder of his life in a prison.

All this frightful story Mr. Montagu relates fairly. He neither conceals nor distorts and material fact. But he can see nothing deserving of condemnation in Bacon's conduct. He tells us most truly that we ought not to try the men of one age by the standard of another; that Sir Matthew Hale is not to be pronounced a bad man because he left a woman to be executed for witchcraft; that posterity will not be justified in censuring judges of our time, for selling offices in their courts, according to the established practice, bad as that practice was; and that Bacon is entitled to similar indulgence. "To persecute the lover of truth," says Mr. Montagu, "for opposing established customs, and to censure him in after ages for not having been more strenuous in opposition are errors which will never cease until the pleasure of self-elevation from the depression of superiority is no more."

We have no dispute with Mr. Montagu about the general proposition. We assent to every word of it. But does it apply to the present case? Is it true that in the time of James the First it was the established practice for the law-officers of the Crown, to hold private consultations with the judges, touching Capital cases which those judges were afterwards to try? Certainly not. In the very page in which Mr. Montagu asserts that "influencing a judge out of court seems at that period scarcely to have been considered as improper," he gives the very words of Sir Edward Coke on the subject. "I will not thus declare what may be my judgment by these auricular confessions of *new* and pernicious tendency, and *not according to the customs of the realm.*" Is it possible to imagine that Coke, who had himself been Attorney-General during thirteen years, who had conducted a far greater number of important state-prosecutions than any other lawyer

named in English history, and who had passed with scarcely any interval from the Attorney-Generalship to the first seat in the first criminal court in the realm, could have been startled at an invitation to confer with the crown-lawyers, and could have pronounced the practice new, if it had really been an established usage? We well know that, where property only was at stake, it was then a common, though a most culpable practice, in the judges, to listen to private solicitations. But the practice of tampering with judges in order to procure capital convictions we believe to have been new, first, because Coke, who understood those matters better than any man of his time, asserted it to be new; and secondly, because neither Bacon nor Mr. Montagu has shown a single precedent.

How then stands the case? Even thus: Bacon was not conforming to an usage then generally admitted to be proper. He was not even the last lingering adherent of an old abuse. It would have been sufficiently disgraceful to such a man to be in this last situation. Yet this last situation would have been honorable compared with that in which he stood. He was guilty of attempting to introduce into the courts of law an odious abuse for which no precedent could be found. Intellectually, he was better fitted than any man that England has ever produced for the work of improving her institutions. But unhappily, we see that he did not scruple to exert his great powers for the purpose of introducing into those institutions new corruptions of the foulest kind.

The same, or nearly the same, may be said of the torturing of Peacham. If it be true that in the time of James the First the propriety of torturing prisoners was generally allowed, we should admit this as an excuse, though we should admit it less readily in the case of such a man as Bacon than in the case of an ordinary lawyer or politician. But the fact is, that the

practice of torturing prisoners was then generally acknowledged by lawyers to be illegal, and was execrated by the public as barbarous. More than thirty years before Peacham's trial, that practice was so loudly condemned by the voice of the nation that Lord Burleigh found it necessary to publish an apology for having occasionally resorted to it. But though the dangers which then threatened the government were of a very different kind from those which were to be apprehended from any thing that Peacham could write, though the life of the Queen and the dearest interests of the state were in jeopardy, though the circumstances were such that all ordinary laws might seem to be superseded by that highest law, the public safety, the apology did not satisfy the country: and the Queen found it expedient to issue an order positively forbidding the torturing of state-prisoners on any pretence whatever. From that time, the practice of torturing, which had always been unpopular, which had always been illegal, had also been unusual. It is well known that in 1628, only fourteen years after the time when Bacon went to the Tower to listen to the yells of Peacham, the judges decided that Felton, a criminal who neither deserved nor was likely to obtain any extraordinary indulgence, could not lawfully be put to the question. We therefore say that Bacon stands in a very different situation from that in which Mr. Montagu tries to place him. Bacon was here distinctly behind his age. He was one of the last of the tools of power who persisted in a practice the most barbarous and the most absurd that has ever disgraced jurisprudence, in a practice of which in the preceding generation, Elizabeth and her ministers had been ashamed, in a practice which, a few years later, no sycophant in all the Inns of Court had the heart or the forehead to defend.*

* Since this review was written, Mr. Jardine have published a very learned and ingenious Reading on the

Bacon far behind his age ! Bacon far behind Sir Edward Coke ! Bacon clinging to exploded abuses ! Bacon withstanding the progress of improvement ! Bacon struggling to push back the human mind ! The words seem strange. They sound like a contradiction in terms. Yet the fact is even so : and the explanation may be readily found by any person who is not blinded by prejudice. Mr. Montagu cannot believe that so extraordinary a man as Bacon could be guilty of a bad action ; as if history were not made up of the bad actions of extraordinary men, as if all the most noted destroyers and deceivers of our species, all the founders of arbitrary governments and false religions, had not been extraordinary men, as if nine tenths of the calamities which have befallen the human race had any other origin than the union of high intelligence with low desires. Bacon knew this well. He has told us that there are persons "*scientia tanquam angeli alati, cupiditatibus vero tanquam serpentes qui humi reptant ;*" * and it did not require his admirable sagacity and his extensive converse with mankind to make the discovery. Indeed, he had only to look within. The difference between the soaring angel and the creeping snake was but a type of the difference between Bacon the philosopher and Bacon the Attorney-General, Bacon seeking for truth, and Bacon seeking for the Seals. Those who survey only

use of torture in England. It has not however, been thought necessary to make any change in the observations on Peacham's case.

It is impossible to discuss within the limits of a note, the extensive question raised by Mr. Jardine. It is sufficient here to say that every argument by which he attempts to show that the use of the rack was anciently a lawful exertion of royal prerogative may be urged with equal force, nay with far greater force, to prove the lawfulness of benevolences, of ship-money, of Mompesson's patent of Eliot's imprisonment, of every abuse, without exception, which is condemned by the petition of Right and the Declaration of Right.

* *De Augmentis, Lib. v. Cap. 1.*

one half of his character may speak of him with unmixed admiration, or with unmixed contempt. But those only judge of him correctly who take in at one view Bacon in speculation and Bacon in action. They will have no difficulty in comprehending how one and the same man should have been far before his age and far behind it, in one line the boldest and most useful of innovators, in another line the most obstinate champion of the foulest abuses. In his library, all his rare powers were under the guidance of an honest ambition, of an enlarged philanthropy, of a sincere love of truth. There, no temptation drew him away from the right course. Thomas Aquinas could pay no fees, Duns Scotus could confer no peerages. The Master of the Sentences had no rich reversions in his gift. Far different was the situation of the great philosopher when he came forth from his study and his laboratory to mingle with the crowd which filled the galleries of Whitehall. In all that crowd there was no man equally qualified to render great and lasting services to mankind. But in all that crowd there was not a heart more set on things which no man ought to suffer to be necessary to his happiness, on things which can often be obtained only by the sacrifice of integrity and honor. To be the leader of the human race in the career of improvement, to found on the ruins of ancient intellectual dynasties a more prosperous and a more enduring empire, to be revered by the latest generations as the most illustrious among the benefactors of mankind, all this was within his reach. But all this availed him nothing while some quibbling special pleader was promoted before him to the bench, while some heavy country gentleman took precedence of him by virtue of a purchased coronet, while some pandar, happy in a fair wife, could obtain a more cordial salute from Buckingham, while some buffoon, versed in all the latest

scandal of the court, could draw a louder laugh from James.

During a long course of years, Bacon's unworthy ambition was crowned with success. His sagacity early enabled him to perceive who was likely to become the most powerful man in the kingdom. He probably knew the King's mind before it was known to the King himself, and attached himself to Villiers, while the less discerning crowd of courtiers still continued to fawn on Somerset. The influence of the younger favorite became greater daily. The contest between the rivals might, however, have lasted long, but for that frightful crime which, in spite of all that could be effected by the research and ingenuity of historians, is still covered with so mysterious an obscurity. The descent of Somerset had been a gradual and almost imperceptible lapse. It now became a headlong fall; and Villiers, left without a competitor, rapidly rose to a height of power such as no subject since Wolsey had attained.

There were many points of resemblance between the two celebrated courtiers who, at different times, extended their patronage to Bacon. It is difficult to say whether Essex or Villiers was more eminently distinguished by those graces of person and manner which have always been rated in courts at much more than their real value. Both were constitutionally brave; and both, like most men who are constitutionally brave, were open and unreserved. Both were rash and headstrong. Both were destitute of the abilities and of the information which are necessary to statesmen. Yet both, trusting to the accomplishment which had made them conspicuous in tilt-yards and ball-rooms, aspired to rule the state. Both owed their elevation to the personal attachment of the sovereign; and in both cases this attachment was of so eccentric a kind, that it perplexed observers, that it still continues to perplex historians, and that it gave rise to much scandal

which we are inclined to think unfounded. Each of them treated the sovereign whose favor he enjoyed with a rudeness which approached to insolence. This petulance ruined Essex, who had to deal with a spirit naturally as proud as his own, and accustomed, during near half a century, to the most respectful observance. But there was a wide difference between the haughty daughter of Henry and her successor. James was timid from the cradle. His nerves, naturally weak, had not been fortified by reflection or by habit. His life, till he came to England, had been a series of mortifications and humiliations. With all his high notions of the origin and extent of his prerogatives, he was never his own master for a day. In spite of his kingly title, in spite of his despotic theories, he was to the last a slave at heart. Villiers treated him like one ; and this course, though adopted, we believe, merely from temper, succeeded as well as if it had been a system of policy formed after mature deliberation.

In generosity, in sensibility, in capacity for friendship, Essex far surpassed Buckingham. Indeed, Buckingham can scarcely be said to have had any friend, with the exception of the two princes over whom successively he exercised so wonderful an influence. Essex was to the last adored by the people. Buckingham was always a most unpopular man, except perhaps for a very short time after his return from the childish visit to Spain. Essex fell a victim to the rigor of the government amidst the lamentations of the people. Buckingham, execrated by the people, and solemnly declared a public enemy by the representative of the people, fell by the hand of one of the people, and was lamented by none but his master.

The way in which the two favorites acted towards Bacon was highly characteristic, and may serve to illustrate the old and true saying, that a man is generally more inclined to feel kindly towards one on whom he has conferred favors,

than towards one from whom he has received them. Essex loaded Bacon with benefits, and never thought that he had done enough. It seems never to have crossed the mind of the powerful and wealthy noble that the poor barristerwhom he treated with such munificent kindness was not his equal. It was, we have no doubt, with perfect sincerity that the Earl declared that he would willingly give his sister or daughter in marriage to his friend. He was in general more than sufficiently sensible of his own merits; but he did not seem to know that he had ever deserved well of Bacon. On that cruel day when they saw each other for the last time at the bar of the Lords, Essex taxed his perfidious friend with unkindness and insincerity, but never with ingratitude. Even in such a moment, more bitter than the bitterness of death, that noble heart was too great to vent itself in such a reproach.

Villiers, on the other hand, owed much to Bacon. When their acquaintance began, Sir Francis was a man of mature age, of high station, and of established fame as a politician, an advocate, and a writer. Villiers was little more than a boy, a younger son of a house then of no great note. He was but just entering on the career of court favor; and none but the most discerning observers could as yet perceive that he was likely to distance all his competitors. The countenance and advice of a man so highly distinguished as the Attorney-General must have been an object of the highest importance to the young adventurer. But though Villiers was the obliged party, he was far less warmly attached to Bacon, and far less delicate in his conduct towards Bacon, than Essex had been.

To do the new favorite justice, he early exerted his influence in behalf of his illustrious friend. In 1616, Sir Francis was sworn of the Privy Council, and in March, 1617, on the re-

tirement of Lord Brackley, was appointed Keeper of the Great Seal.

On the seventh of May, the first day of term, he rode in state to Westminster Hall, with the Lord Treasurer on his right hand, the Lord Privy Seal on his left, a long procession of students and ushers before him, and a crowd of peers, privy-councillors, and judges following in his train. Having entered his court, he addressed the splendid auditory in a grave and dignified speech, which proves how well he understood those judicial duties which he afterwards performed so ill. Even at that moment, the proudest moment of his life in the estimation of the vulgar, and it may be, even in his own, he cast back a look of lingering affection towards those noble pursuits from which, as it seemed, he was about to be estranged. "The depth of the three long vacations," said he, "I would reserve in some measure free from business of estate, and for studies, arts, and sciences, to which of my own nature I am most inclined."

The years during which Bacon held the Great Seal were among the darkest and most shameful in English history. Everything at home and abroad was mismanaged. First came the execution of Raleigh, an act which, if done in a proper manner, might have been defensible, but which, under all the circumstances, must be considered as a dastardly murder. Worse was behind, the war of Bohemia, the successes of Tilly and Spinola, the Palatinate conquered, the King's son-in-law an exile, the house of Austria dominant on the Continent, the Protestant religion and the liberties of the Germanic body trodden under foot. Meanwhile, the wavering and cowardly policy of England furnished matter of ridicule to all the nations of Europe. The love of peace which James professed would, even when indulged to an impolitic excess, have been respectable, if it had proceeded from tender

ness for his people. But the truth is that, while he had nothing to spare for the defence of the natural allies of England, he resorted without scruple to the most illegal and oppressive devices, for the purpose of enabling Buckingham and Buckingham's relations to outshine the ancient aristocracy of the realm. Benevolences were exacted. Patents of monopoly were multiplied. All the resources which could have been employed to replenish a beggared Exchequer, at the close of a ruinous war, were put in motion during this season of ignominious peace.

The vices of the administration must be chiefly ascribed to the weakness of the King and to the levity and violence of the favorite. But it is impossible to acquit the Lord Keeper of all share in the guilt. For those odious patents, in particular, which passed the Great Seal while it was in his charge, he must be held answerable. In the speech which he made on first taking his seat in his court, he had pledged himself to discharge this important part of his functions with the greatest caution and impartiality. He had declared that he "would walk in the light," "that men should see that no particular turn or end led him, but a general rule." Mr. Montagu would have us believe that Bacon acted up to these professions, and says that "the power of the favorite did not deter the Lord Keeper from staying grants and patents when his public duty demanded this interposition." Does Mr. Montagu consider patents of monopoly as good things? Or does he mean to say that Bacon staid every patent of monopoly that came before him? Of all patents in our history, the most disgraceful was that which was granted to Sir Giles Mompesson, supposed to be the original of Massinger's *Overreach*, and to Sir Francis Michell, from whom Justice Greedy is supposed to have been drawn, for the exclusive manufacturing of gold and silver lace. The

effect of this monopoly was of course that the metal employed in the manufacture was adulterated to the great loss of the public. But this was a trifle. The patentees were armed with powers as great as have ever been given to farmers of the revenue in the worst governed countries. They were authorized to search houses and to arrest interlopers; and these formidable powers were used for purposes viler than even those for which they were given, for the wreaking of old grudges, and for the corrupting of female chastity. Was not this a case in which public duty demanded the interposition of the Lord Keeper? And did the Lord Keeper interpose? He did. He wrote to inform the King, that he "had considered of the fitness and conveniency of the gold and silver thread business," "that it was convenient that it should be settled," that he "did conceive apparent liklihood that it would redound much to his Majesty's profit," that, therefore, "it were good it were settled with all convenient speed." The meaning of all this was, that certain of the house of Villiers were to go shares with Overreach and Greedy in the plunder of the public. This was the way in which, when the favorite pressed for patents, lucrative to his relations and to his creatures, ruinous and vexatious to the body of the people, the chief guardian of the laws interposed. Having assisted the patentees to obtain this monopoly, Bacon assisted them also in the steps which they took for the purpose of guarding it. He committed several people to close confinement for disobeying his tyrannical edict. It is needless to say more. Our readers are now able to judge whether, in the matter of patents, Bacon acted conformably to his professions, or deserved the praise which his biographer has bestowed on him.

In his judicial capacity his conduct was not less reprehensible. He suffered Buckingham to dictate many of his decisions. Bacon knew

as well as any man that a judge who listens to private solicitations is a disgrace to his post. He had himself, before he was raised to the woolsack, represented this strongly to Villiers, then just entering on his career. "By no means," said Sir Francis, in a letter of advice addressed to the young courtier, "by no means be you persuaded to interpose yourself, either by word or letter, in any cause depending in any court of justice, nor suffer any great man to do it where you can hinder it. If it should prevail, it prevails justice; but if the judge be so just and of such courage as he ought to be, as not to be inclined thereby, yet it always leaves a taint of suspicion behind it." Yet he had not been Lord Keeper a month when Buckingham began to interfere in Chancery suits; and Buckingham's interference was, as might have been expected, successful.

Mr. Montagu's reflections on the excellent passage which we have quoted above are exceedingly amusing. "No man," says he, "more deeply felt the evils which then existed of the interference of the Crown and of statesmen to influence judges. How beautifully did he admonish Buckingham, regardless as he proved of all admonition!" We should be glad to know how it can be expected that admonition will be regarded by him who receives it, when it is altogether neglected by him who gives it. We do not defend Buckingham: but what was his guilt to Bacon's? Buckingham was young, ignorant, thoughtless, dizzy with the rapidity of his ascent and the height of his position. That he should be eager to serve his relations, his flatterers, his mistresses, that he should not fully apprehend the immense importance of a pure administration of justice, that he should think more about those who were bound to him by private ties than about the public interest, all this was perfectly natural, and not altogether unpardonable. Those who intrust a

petulant, hot-blooded, ill-informed lad with power, are more to blame than he for the mischief which he may do it. How could it be expected of a lively page, raised by a wild freak of fortune to the first influence in the empire, that he should have bestowed any serious thought on the principles which ought to guide judicial decisions? Bacon was the ablest public man then living in Europe. He was near sixty years old. He had thought much, and to good purpose, on the general principles of law. He had for many years borne a part daily in the administration of justice. It was impossible that a man with a tithe of his sagacity and experience should not have known that a judge who suffers friends or patrons to dictate his decrees violates the plainest rules of duty. In fact, as we have seen, he knew this well: he expressed it admirably. Neither on this occasion nor on any other could his bad actions be attributed to any defect of the head. They sprang from quite a different cause.

A man who stooped to render such services to others was not likely to be scrupulous as to the means by which he enriched himself. He and his dependants accepted large presents from persons who were engaged in Chancery suits. The amount of the plunder which he collected in this way it is impossible to estimate. There can be no doubt that he received very much more than was proved on his trial, though it may be, less than was suspected by the public. His enemies stated his illicit gains at a hundred thousand pounds. But this was probably an exaggeration.

It was long before the day of reckoning arrived. During the interval between the second and third Parliaments of James, the nation was absolutely governed by the Crown. The prospects of the Lord Keeper were bright and serene. His great place rendered the splendor of his talents even more conspicuous, and gave an additional charm to the serenity of his tem-

per, the courtesy of his manners, and the eloquence of his conversation. The pillaged suitor might mutter. The austere Puritan patriot might, in his retreat, grieve that one on whom God had bestowed without measure all the abilities which qualify men to take the lead in great reforms should be found among the adherents of the worst abuses. But the murmurs of the suitor and the lamentations of the patriot had scarcely any avenue to the ears of the powerful. The King, and the minister who was the King's master, smiled on their illustrious flatterer. The whole crowd of courtiers and nobles sought his favor with emulous eagerness. Men of wit and learning hailed with delight the elevation of one who had so signally shown that a man of profound learning and of brilliant wit might understand, far better than any plodding dunce, the art of thriving in the world.

Once, and but once, this course of prosperity was for a moment interrupted. It should seem that even Bacon's brain was not strong enough to bear without some discomposure the inebriating effect of so much good fortune. For some time after his elevation he showed himself a little wanting in that wariness and self-command to which, more than even to his transcendent talents, his elevation was to be ascribed. He was by no means a good hater. The temperature of his revenge, like that of his gratitude, was scarcely ever more than lukewarm. But there was one person whom he had long regarded with an animosity which, though studiously suppressed, was perhaps the stronger for the suppression. The insults and injuries which, when a young man struggling into note and professional practice, he had received from Sir Edward Coke, were such as might move the most placable nature to resentment. About the time at which Bacon received the Seals, Coke had, on account of his contumacious resistance to the royal pleasure, been deprived of

his seat in the Court of King's Bench, and had ever since languished in retirement. But Coke's opposition to the Court, we fear, was the effect not of good principles, but of a bad temper. Perverse and testy as he was, he wanted true fortitude and dignity of character. His obstinacy, unsupported by virtuous motives, was not proof against disgrace. He solicited a reconciliation with the favorite, and his solicitations were successful. Sir John Villiers, the brother of Buckingham, was looking out for a rich wife. Coke had a large fortune and an unmarried daughter. A bargain was struck. But Lady Coke, the Lady whom twenty years before Essex had wooed on behalf of Bacon, would not hear of the match. A violent and scandalous family quarrel followed. The mother carried the girl away by stealth. The father pursued them and regained possession of his daughter by force. The King was then in Scotland, and Buckingham had attended him thither. Bacon was, during their absence, at the head of affairs in England. He felt towards Coke as much malevolence as it was in his nature to feel towards anybody. His wisdom had been laid to sleep by prosperity. In an evil hour he determined to interfere in the disputes which agitated his enemy's household. He declared for the wife, countenanced the Attorney-General in filing an information in the Star Chamber against the husband, and wrote letters to the King and the favorite against the proposed marriage. The strong language which he used in those letters shows that, sagacious as he was, he did not quite know his place, and that he was not fully acquainted with the extent either of Buckingham's power, or of the change which the possession of that power had produced in Buckingham's character. He soon had a lesson which he never forgot. The favorite received the news of the Lord Keeper's interference with feelings of the most violent resentment,

and made the King even more angry than himself. Bacon's eyes were at once opened to his error, and to all its possible consequences. He had been elated, if not intoxicated, by greatness. The shock sobered him in an instant. He was all himself again. He apologized submissively for his interference. He directed the Attorney-General to stop the proceedings against Coke. He sent to tell Lady Coke that he could do nothing for her. He announced to both the families that he was desirous to promote the connection. Having given these proofs of contrition, he ventured to present himself before Buckingham. But the young upstart did not think that he had yet sufficiently humbled an old man who had been his friend and his benefactor, who was the highest civil functionary in the realm, and the most eminent man of letters in the world. It is said that on two successive days Bacon repaired to Buckingham's house, that on two successive days he was suffered to remain in an antechamber among foot-boys, seated on an old wooden box, with the Great Seal of England at his side, and that when at length he was admitted, he flung himself on the floor, kissed the favorite's feet, and vowed never to rise again until he was forgiven. Sir Anthony Weldon, on whose authority this story rests, is likely enough to have exaggerated the meanness of Bacon and the insolence of Buckingham. But it is difficult to imagine that so circumstantial a narrative, written by a person who avers that he was present on the occasion can be wholly without foundation; and, unhappily there is little in the character either of the favorite or of the Lord Keeper to make the narrative improbable. It is certain that a reconciliation took place on terms humiliating to Bacon, who never more ventured to cross any purpose of anybody who bore the name of Villiers. He put a strong curb on those angry passions which had for the first time in his life

mastered his prudence. He went through the forms of a reconciliation with Coke, and did his best, by seeking opportunities of paying little civilities, and by avoiding all that could produce collision, to tame the untamable ferocity of his old enemy.

In the main, however, Bacon's life, while he held the Great Seal, was, in outward appearance, most enviable. In London he lived with great dignity at York House, the venerable mansion of his father. Here it was that, in January, 1620, he celebrated his entrance into his sixtieth year amidst a splendid circle of friends. He had then exchanged the appellation of Keeper for the higher title of Chancellor. Ben Jonson was one of the party, and wrote on the occasion some of the happiest of his rugged rhymes. All things, he tells us, seemed to smile about the old house, "the fire the wine, the men." The spectacle of the accomplished host, after a life marked by no great disaster, entering on a green old age, in the enjoyment of riches, power, high honors undiminished mental activity, and vast literary reputation, made a strong impression on the poet, if we may judge from those well-known lines :

"England's high Chancellor, the destined heir,
In his soft cradle to his father's chair."
Whose even thread the Fates spin round and full
Out of their choicest and their whitest wool."

In the intervals of rest which Bacon's political and judicial functions afforded, he was in the habit of retiring to Gorhambury. At that place his business was literature, and his favorite amusement gardening, which in one of his most interesting Essays he calls "the purest of human pleasures." In his magnificent grounds he erected, at a cost of ten thousand pounds, a retreat to which he repaired when he wished to avoid all visitors, and to devote himself wholly to study. On such occasions, a

few young men of distinguished talents were sometimes the companions of his retirement ; and among them his quick eye soon discerned the superior abilities of Thomas Hobbes. It is not probable, however, that he fully appreciated the powers of his disciple, or foresaw the vast influence, both for good and for evil, which that most vigorous and acute of human intellects was destined to exercise on the two succeeding generations.

In January, 1621, Bacon had reached the zenith of his fortunes. He had just published the *Novum Organum* ; and that extraordinary book had drawn forth the warmest expressions of admiration from the ablest men in Europe. He had obtained honors of a widely different kind, but perhaps not less valued by him. He had been created Baron Verulam. He had subsequently been raised to the higher dignity of Viscount St. Albans. His patent was drawn in the most flattering terms, and the Prince of Wales signed it as a witness. The ceremony of investiture was performed with great state at Theobalds, and Buckingham condescended to be one of the chief actors. Posterity has felt that the greatest of English philosophers could derive no accession of dignity from any title which James could bestow, and, in defiance of the royal letters patent, has obstinately refused to degrade Francis Bacon into Viscount St. Albans.

In a few weeks was signally brought to the test the value of those objects for which Bacon had sullied his integrity, had resigned his independence, had violated the most sacred obligations of friendship and gratitude, had flattered the worthless, had persecuted the innocent, had tampered with judges, had tortured prisoners, had plundered suitors, had wasted on paltry intrigues all the powers of the most exquisitely constructed intellect that has ever been bestowed on any of the children of men. A sudden and terrible reverse was at hand. A

parliament had been summoned. After six years of silence the voice of the nation was again to be heard. Only three days after the pageant which was performed at Theobalds in honor of Bacon, the Houses met.

Want of money had, as usual, induced the King to convoke his Parliament. It may be doubted, however, whether, if he or his ministers had been at all aware of the state of public feeling, they would not have tried any expedient or borne with any inconvenience, rather than have ventured to face the deputies of a justly exasperated nation. But they did not discern those times. Indeed almost all the political blunders of James, and of his more unfortunate son, arose from one great error. During the fifty years which preceded the Long Parliament a great and progressive change was taking place in the public mind. The nature and extent of this change was not in the least understood by either of the first two Kings of the House of Stuart, or by any of their advisers. That the nation became more and more discontented every year, that every House of Commons was more unmanageable than that which had preceded it, were facts which it was impossible not to perceive. But the Court could not understand why these things were so. The Court could not see that the English people and the English Government, though they might once have been well suited to each other, were suited to each other no longer ; that the nation had outgrown its old institutions, was every day more uneasy under them, was pressing against them, and would soon burst through them. The alarming phenomena, the existence of which no sycophant could deny, were ascribed to every cause except the true one. " In my first Parliament," said James, " I was a novice. In my next, there was a kind of beasts called undertakers," and so forth. In the third Parliament he could hardly be called a novice, and those beasts,

the undertakers, did not exist. Yet his third Parliament gave him more trouble than either the first or the second.

The Parliament had no sooner met than the House of Commons proceeded, in a temperate and respectful, but most determined manner, to discuss the public grievances. Their first attacks were directed against those odious patents, under cover of which Buckingham and his creatures had pillaged and oppressed the nation. The vigor with which these proceedings were conducted spread dismay through the Court. Buckingham thought himself in danger, and, in his alarm, had recourse to an adviser who had lately acquired considerable influence over him, Williams, Dean of Westminster. This person had already been of great use to the favorite in a very delicate matter. Buckingham had set his heart on marrying Lady Catherine Manners, daughter and heiress of the Earl of Rutland. But the difficulties were great. The Earl was haughty and impracticable, and the young lady was a Catholic. Williams soothed the pride of the father, and found arguments which, for a time at least, quieted the conscience of the daughter. For these services he had been rewarded with considerable preferment in the Church; and he was now rapidly rising to the same place in the regard of Buckingham which had formerly been occupied by Bacon.

Williams was one of those who are wiser for others than for themselves. His own public life was unfortunate, and was made unfortunate by his strange want of judgment and self-command at several important conjunctures. But the counsel which he gave on this occasion showed no want of worldly wisdom. He advised the favorite to abandon all thoughts of defending the monopolies, to find some foreign embassy for his brother Sir Edward, who was deeply implicated in the villanies of Mompesson, and to leave the other offenders to the

justice of Parliament. Buckingham received this advice with the warmest expressions of gratitude, and declared that a load had been lifted from his heart. He then repaired with Williams to the royal presence. They found the King engaged in earnest consultation with Prince Charles. The plan of operations proposed by the Dean was fully discussed, and approved in all its parts.

The first victims whom the Court abandoned to the vengeance of the Commons were Sir Giles Mompesson and Sir Francis Michell. It was some time before Bacon began to entertain any apprehensions. His talents and his address gave him great influence in the house of which he had lately become a member, as indeed they must have in any assembly. In the House of Commons he had many personal friends and many warm admirers. But at length, about six weeks after the meeting of Parliament, the storm burst.

A committee of the lower House had been appointed to inquire into the state of the Courts of Justice. On the fifteenth of March, the chairman of that committee, Sir Robert Philips, member for Bath, reported that great abuses had been discovered. "The person," said he, "against whom these things are alleged is no less than the Lord Chancellor, a man so endued with all parts, both of nature and art, as that I will say no more of him, being not able to say enough." Sir Robert then proceeded to state, in the most temperate manner, the nature of the charges. A person of the name of Aubrey had a case depending in Chancery. He had been almost ruined by law-expenses, and his patience had been almost exhausted by the delays of the court. He received a hint from some of the hangers-on of the Chancellor that a present of one hundred pounds would expedite matters. The poor man had not the sum required. However; having found out an usurer who accommodated

him with it at high interest, he carried it to York House. The Chancellor took the money, and his dependents assured the suitor that all would go right. Aubrey was, however, disappointed; for, after considerable delay, "a killing decree" was pronounced against him. Another suitor of the name of Egerton complained that he had been induced by two of the Chancellor's jackals to make his Lordship a present of four hundred pounds, and that, nevertheless, he had not been able to obtain a decree in his favor. The evidence to these facts was overwhelming. Bacon's friends could only entreat the House to suspend its judgment, and to send up the case to the Lords, in a form less offensive than an impeachment.

On the nineteenth of March the King sent a message to the Commons, expressing his deep regret that so eminent a person as the Chancellor should be suspected of misconduct. His Majesty declared that he had no wish to screen the guilty from justice, and proposed to appoint a new kind of tribunal, consisting of eighteen commissioners, who might be chosen from among the members of the two Houses, to investigate the matter. The Commons were not disposed to depart from their regular course of proceeding. On the same day they had a conference with the Lords, and delivered in the heads of the accusation against the Chancellor. At this conference Bacon was not present. Overwhelmed with shame and remorse, and abandoned by all those in whom he had weakly put his trust, he had shut himself up in his chamber from the eyes of men. The dejection of his mind soon disordered his body. Buckingham, who visited him by the King's order, "found his Lordship very sick and heavy." It appears from a pathetic letter which the unhappy man addressed to the Peers on the day of the conference, that he neither expected nor wished to survive his disgrace. During several days he remained in his bed,

refusing to see any human being. He passionately told his attendants to leave him, to forget him, never again to name his name, never to remember that there had been such a man in the world. In the mean time, fresh instances of corruption were every day brought to the knowledge of his accusers. The number of charges rapidly increased from two to twenty-three. The Lords entered on the investigation of the case with laudable alacrity. Some witnesses were examined at the bar of the House. A select committee was appointed to take the depositions of others; and the inquiry was rapidly proceeding, when, on the twenty-sixth day of March, the King adjourned the Parliament for three weeks.

This measure revived Bacon's hopes. He made the most of his short respite. He attempted to work on the feeble mind of the King. He appealed to all the strongest feelings of James, to his fears, to his vanity, to his high notions of prerogative. Would the Solomon of the age commit so gross an error as to encourage the encroaching spirit of Parliament? Would God's anointed, accountable to God alone, pay homage to the clamorous multitude? "Those," exclaimed Bacon, "who now strike at the Chancellor will soon strike at the Crown. I am the first sacrifice. I wish I may be the last." But all his eloquence and address were employed in vain. Indeed, whatever Mr. Montagu may say, we are firmly convinced that it was not in the King's power to save Bacon, without having recourse to measures which would have convulsed the realm. The Crown had not sufficient influence over the Parliament to procure an acquittal in so clear a case of guilt. And to dissolve a Parliament which is universally allowed to have been one of the best Parliaments that ever sat, which had acted liberally and respectfully towards the Sovereign, and which enjoyed in the highest degree the favor of the people, only in order to

stop a grave, temperate, and constitutional inquiry into the personal integrity of the first judge in the kingdom, would have been a measure more scandalous and absurd than any of those which were the ruin of the House of Stuart. Such a measure, while it would have been as fatal to the Chancellor's honor as a conviction, would have endangered the very existence of the monarchy. The King, acting by the advice of Williams, very properly refused to engage in a dangerous struggle with his people, for the purpose of saving from legal condemnation a minister whom it was impossible to save from dishonor. He advised Bacon to plead guilty, and promised to do all in his power to mitigate the punishment. Mr. Montagu is exceedingly angry with James on this account. But though we are, in general, very little inclined to admire that Prince's conduct, we really think that his advice was, under all the circumstances, the best advice that could have been given.

On the seventeenth of April, the Houses reassembled, and the Lords resumed their inquiries into the abuses of the Court of Chancery. On the twenty-second, Bacon addressed the Peers a letter, which the Prince of Wales to condescended to deliver. In this artful and pathetic composition, the Chancellor acknowledged his guilt in guarded and general terms, and, while acknowledging, endeavored to palliate it. This, however, was not thought sufficient by his judges. They required a more particular confession, and sent him a copy of the charges. On the thirtieth, he delivered a paper, in which he admitted, with a few and unimportant reservations, the truth of the accusations brought against him, and threw himself entirely on the mercy of his peers. "Upon advised consideration of the charges," said he, "descending into my own conscience, and calling my memory to account so far as I am able, I do plainly and ingenuously con-

fess that I am guilty of corruption, and do renounce all defence."

The Lords came to a resolution that the Chancellor's confession appeared to be full and ingenuous, and sent a committee to inquire of him whether it was really subscribed by himself. The deputies, among whom was Southampton, the common friend, many years before, of Bacon and Essex, performed their duty with great delicacy. Indeed the agonies of such a mind and the degradation of such a name might well have softened the most obdurate natures. "My Lords," said Bacon, "it is my act, my hand, my heart. I beseech you Lordships to be merciful to a broken reed." They withdrew; and he again retired to his chamber in the deepest dejection. The next day, the serjeant-at-arms and the usher of the House of Lords came to conduct him to Westminster Hall, where sentence was to be pronounced. But they found him so unwell that he could not leave his bed; and this excuse for his absence was readily accepted. In no quarter does there appear to have been the smallest desire to add to his humiliation.

The sentence was, however, severe. the more severe, no doubt, because the Lords knew that it would not be executed, and that they had an excellent opportunity of exhibiting, at small cost, the inflexibility of their justice, and their abhorrence of corruption. Bacon was condemned to pay a fine of forty thousand pounds, and to be imprisoned in the Tower during the King's pleasure. He was declared incapable of holding any office in the State, or of sitting in Parliament; and he was banished for life from the verge of the Court. In such misery and shame ended that long career of worldly wisdom and worldly prosperity.

Even at this pass Mr. Montagu does not desert his hero. He seems indeed to think that the attachment of an editor ought to be as devoted as that of Mr. Moore's lovers;

and cannot conceive what biography was made for,

“ if tis not the same

Through joy and through torment, through glory
and shame.”

He assures us that Bacon was innocent, that he had the means of making a perfectly satisfactory defence, that when he “ plainly and ingenuously confessed that he was guilty of corruption,” and when he afterwards solemnly affirmed that his confession was “ his act, his hand, his heart,” he was telling a great lie, and that he refrained from bringing forward proofs of his innocence, because he durst not disobey the King and the favorite, who, for his own selfish objects, pressed him to plead guilty.

Now, in the first place, there is not the smallest reason to believe that, if James and Buckingham had thought that Bacon had a good defence, they would have prevented him from making it. What conceivable motive had they for doing so ? Mr. Montagu perpetually repeats that it was their interest to sacrifice Bacon. But he overlooks an obvious distinction. It was their interest to sacrifice Bacon on the supposition of his guilt ; but not on the supposition of his innocence. James was very properly unwilling to run the risk of protecting his Chancellor against the Parliament. But if the Chancellor had been able, by force of argument, to obtain an acquittal from the Parliament, we have no doubt that both the King and Villiers would have heartily rejoiced. They would have rejoiced, not merely on account of their friendship for Bacon which seems, however, to have been as sincere as most friendships of that sort, but on selfish grounds. Nothing could have strengthened the government more than such a victory. The King and the favorite abandoned the Chancellor because they were unable to avert his disgrace, and unwilling to share it. Mr. Montagu mistakes effect for cause. He thinks

that Bacon did not prove his innocence, because he was not supported by the Court. The truth evidently is that the Court did not venture to support Bacon, because he could not prove his innocence.

Again, it seems strange that Mr. Montagu should not perceive that, while attempting to vindicate Bacon's reputation, he is really casting on in the foulest of all aspersions. He imputes to his idol a degree of meanness and depravity more loathsome than judicial corruption itself. A corrupt judge may have many good qualities. But a man who, to please a powerful patron, solemnly declares himself guilty of corruption when he knows himself to be innocent, must be a master of servility and impudence. Bacon was, to say nothing of his highest claims to respect, a gentleman, a nobleman, a scholar, a statesman, a man of the first consideration in society, a man far advanced in years. Is it possible to believe that such a man would, to gratify any human being, irreparably ruin his own character by his own act? Imagine a gray-headed judge, full of years and honors, owning with tears, with pathetic assurance of his penitence and of his sincerity, that he has been guilty of shameful malpractices, repeatedly asseverating the truth of his confession, subscribing it with his own hand, submitting to conviction, receiving a humiliating sentence and acknowledging its justice, and all this when he has it in his power to show that his conduct has been irreproachable! The thing is incredible. But if we admit it to be true, what must we think of such a man, if indeed he deserves the name of man, who thinks any thing that kings and minions can bestow more precious than honor, or anything that they can inflict more terrible than infamy?

Of this most disgraceful imputation we fully acquit Bacon. He had no defence; and Mr. Montagu's affectionate attempt to make a defence for him has altogether failed.

The grounds on which Mr. Montagu rests the case are two ; the first, that the taking of presents was usual, and, what he seems to consider as the same thing, not discreditable ; the second, that these presents were not taken as bribes.

Mr. Montagu brings forward many facts in support of his first proposition, He is not content with showing that many English judges formerly received gifts from suitors, but collects similar instances from foreign nations and ancient times. He goes back to the commonwealths of Greece, and attempts to press into his service a line of Homer and a sentence of Plutarch, which, we fear, will hardly serve his turn. The gold of which Homer speaks was not intended to fee the judges, but was paid into court for the benefit of the successful litigant ; and the gratuities which Pericles, as Plutarch states, distributed among the members of the Athenian tribunals, were legal wages paid out of the public revenue. We can supply Mr. Montagu with passages much more in point. Hesiod, who like poor Aubrey, had a " killing decree" made against him in the Chancery of Ascrea, forgot decorum so far that he ventured to designate the learned persons who presided in that court, as βασιλῆας δώροψάγοις. Plutarch and Diodorus have handed down to the latest ages the respectable name of Anytus, the son of Anthemion, the first defendant who, eluding all the safeguards which the ingenuity of Solon could devise, succeeded in corrupting a bench of Athenian judges. We are indeed so far from grudging Mr. Montagu the aid of Greece, that we will give him Rome into the bargain. We acknowledge that the honorable senators who tried Verres received presents which were worth more than the fee-simple of York House and Gorhambury together, and that the no less honorable senators and knights who professed to believe in the *alibi* of Clodius obtained marks still more extraordinary of the

esteem and gratitude of the defendant. In short, we are ready to admit that, before Bacon's time, and in Bacon's time, judges were in the habit of receiving gifts from suitors.

But is this a defence? We think not. The robberies of Cacus and Barabbas are no apology for those of Turpin. The conduct of the two men of Belial who swore away the life of Naboth has never been cited as an excuse for the perjuries of Oates and Dangerfield. Mr. Montagu has confounded two things which it is necessary carefully to distinguish from each other, if we wish to form a correct judgment of the characters of men of other countries and other times. That an immoral action is, in a particular society, generally considered as innocent, is a good plea for an individual who, being one of that society, and having adopted the notions which prevail among his neighbors, commits that action. But the circumstance that a great many people are in the habit of committing immoral actions is no plea at all. We should think it unjust to call St. Louis a wicked man, because in an age in which toleration was generally regarded as a sin, he persecuted heretics. We should think it unjust to call Cowper's friend, John Newton, a hypocrite and monster, because at a time when the slave-trade was commonly considered by the most respectable people as an innocent and beneficial traffic, he went largely provided with hymn-books and hand-cuffs on a Guinea voyage. But the circumstance that there are twenty thousand thieves in London, is no excuse for a fellow who is caught breaking into a shop. No man is to be blamed for not making discoveries in morality, for not finding out that something which everybody else thinks to be good is really bad. But, if a man does that which he and all around him know to be bad, it is no excuse for him the many others have done the same. We should

be ashamed of spending so much time in pointing out so clear a distinction, but that Mr. Montagu seems altogether to overlook it.

Now to apply these principles to the case before us: let Mr. Montagu prove that, in Bacon's age, the practices for which Bacon was punished were generally considered as innocent; and we admit that he has made out his point. But this we defy him to do. That these practices were common we admit. But they were common just as all wickedness to which there is strong temptation always was and always will be common. They were common just as theft, cheating, perjury, adultery have always been common. They were common, not because people did not know what was right, but because people liked to do what was wrong. They were common, though prohibited by law. They were common, though condemned by public opinion. They were common, because in that age law and public opinion united had not sufficient force to restrain the greediness of powerful and unprincipled magistrates. They were common, as every crime will be common when the gain to which it leads is great, and the chance of punishment small. But, though common, they were universally allowed to be altogether unjustifiable; they were in the highest degree odious; and, though many were guilty of them, none had the audacity publicly to avow and defend them.

We could give a thousand proofs that the opinion then entertained concerning these practices was such as we have described. But we will content ourselves with calling a single witness, honest Hugh Latimer. His sermons, preached more than seventy years before the inquiry into Bacon's conduct, abound with the sharpest invectives against those very practices of which Bacon was guilty, and which, as Mr. Montagu seems to think, nobody ever considered as blamable till Bacon was punished

for them. We could easily fill twenty pages with the homely, but just and forcible rhetoric of the brave old bishop. We shall select a few passages as fair specimens, and no more than fair specimens of the rest. "*Omnes diligunt munera*. They all love bribes. Bribery is a princely kind of thieving. They will be waged by the rich, either to give sentence against the poor, or to put off the poor man's cause. This is the noble theft of princes and magistrates. They are bribe-takers. Nowadays they call them gentle rewards. Let them leave their coloring, and call them by their Christian name—bribes." And again: "Cambyses was a great emperor, such another as our master is. He had many lord deputies, lord presidents, and lieutenants under him. It is a great while ago since I read the history. It chanced he had under him in one of his dominions a briber, a gift-taker, a gratifier of rich men; he followed gifts as fast as he that followed the pudding, a handmaker in his office to make his son a great man, as the old saying is: Happy is the child whose father goeth to the devil. The cry of the poor widow came to the emperor's ear, and caused him to flay the judge quick, and laid his skin in the chair of judgment, that all judges that should give judgment afterwards should sit in the same skin. Surely it was a goodly sign, a goodly monument, the sign of the judge's skin. I pray God we may once see the skin in England." "I am sure," says he in another sermon, "this is *scala inferni*, the right way to hell, to be covetous, to take bribes, and pervert justice. If a judge should ask me the way to hell, I would show him this way. First, let him be a covetous man; let his heart be poisoned with covetousness. Then let him go a little further and take bribes; and, lastly, pervert judgment. Lo, here is the mother, and the daughter, and the daughter's daughter. Avarice is the mother; she brings forth bribe-taking, and

bribe-taking perverting of judgment. There lacks a fourth thing to make up the mess, which, so help me God, if I were to judge, should be *hangum tuum*, a Tyburn tippet to take with him; an it were the judge of the King's Bench, my Lord Chief Judge of England, yea, an it were my Lord Chancellor himself, to Tyburn with him." We will quote but one more passage. "He that took the silver basin and ewer for a bribe, thinketh that it will never come out. But he may now know that I know it, and I know it not alone; there be more beside me that know it. Oh, briber and bribery! He was never a good man that will so take bribes. Nor can I believe that he that is a briber will be a good justice. It will never be merry in England till we have the skins of such. For what needeth bribing where men do their things uprightly?"

This was not the language of a great philosopher who had made new discoveries in moral and political science. It was the plain talk of a plain man, who sprang from the body of the people, who sympathized strongly with their wants and their feelings, and who boldly uttered their opinions. It was on account of the fearless way in which stout-hearted old Hugh exposed the misdeeds of men in ermine tippets and gold collars, that the Londoners cheered him, as he walked down the Strand to preach at Whitehall, struggled for a touch of his gown, and bawled, "Have at them, Father Latimer." It is plain, from the passages which we have quoted, and from fifty others which we might quote, that, long before Bacon was born, the accepting of presents by a judge was known to be a wicked and shameful act, that the fine words under which it was the fashion to veil such corrupt practices were even then seen through by the common people, that the distinction on which Mr. Montagu insists between compliments and bribes was even then laughed at as a mere coloring. There may be

some oratorical exaggeration in what Latimer says about the Tyburn tippet and the sign of the judge's skin; but the fact that he ventured to use such expressions is amply sufficient to prove that the gift-taking judges, the receivers of silver basins and ewers, were regarded as such pests of the commonwealth that a venerable divine might, without any breach of Christian charity, publicly pray to God for their detection and their condign punishment.

Mr. Montagu tells us, most justly, that we ought not to transfer the opinions of our age to a former age. But he has himself committed a greater error than that against which he has cautioned his readers. Without any evidence, nay, in the face of the strongest evidence, he ascribes to the people of a former age a set of opinions which no people ever held. But any hypothesis is in his view more probable than that Bacon should have been a dishonest man. We firmly believe that, if papers were to be discovered which should irresistibly prove that Bacon was concerned in the poisoning of Sir Thomas Overbury, Mr. Montagu would tell us that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it was not thought improper in a man to put arsenic into the broth of his friends, and that we ought to blame, not Bacon, but the age in which he lived.

But why should we have recourse to any other evidence, when the proceedings against Lord Bacon is itself the best evidence on the subject? When Mr. Montagu tells us that we ought not to transfer the opinions of our age to Bacon's age he appears altogether to forget that it was by men of Bacon's own age that Bacon was prosecuted, tried, convicted, and sentenced. Did not they know what their own opinions were? Did not they know whether they thought the taking of gifts by a judge a crime or not? Mr. Montague complains bitterly that Bacon was induced to abstain from making a defence. But, if Bacon's

derence resembled that which is made for him in the volume before us, it would have been unnecessary to trouble the Houses with it. The Lords and Commons did not want Bacon to tell them the thoughts of their own hearts, to inform them that they did not consider such practices as those in which they had detected him as at all culpable. Mr. Montagu's proposition may indeed be fairly stated thus :—It was very hard that Bacon's contemporaries should think it wrong in him to do what they did not think it wrong in him to do. Hard indeed ; and withal somewhat improbable. Will any person say that the Commons who impeached Bacon for taking presents, and the Lords who sentenced him to fine, imprisonment, and degradation for taking presents, did not know that the taking of presents, was a crime ? Or, will any person say that Bacon did not know what the whole House of Commons and the whole House of Lords knew ? Nobody who is not prepared to maintain one of these absurd propositions can deny that Bacon committed what he knew to be a crime.

It cannot be pretended that the Houses were seeking occasion to ruin Bacon, and that they therefore brought him to punishment on charges which they themselves knew to be frivolous. In no quarter was there the faintest indication of a disposition to treat him harshly. Through the whole proceeding there was no symptom of personal animosity or of factious violence in either House. Indeed, we will venture to say that no State-Trial in our history is more creditable to all who took part in it, either as prosecutors or judges. The decency, the gravity, the public spirit, the justice moderated but not unnerved by compassion, which appeared in every part of the transaction, would do honor to the most respectable public men in our own times. The accusers, while they discharged their duty to their constituents by bringing the misdeeds of the Chan-

cellor to light, spoke with admiration of his many eminent qualities. The Lords, while condemning him, complimented him on the ingenuousness of his confession, and spared him the humiliation of a public appearance at their bar. So strong was the contagion of good feeling that even Sir Edward Coke, for the first time in his life, behaved like a gentleman. No criminal ever had more temperate prosecutors than Bacon. No criminal ever had more favorable judges. If he was convicted, it was because it was impossible to acquit him without offering the grossest outrage to justice and common sense.

Mr. Montagu's other argument, namely, that Bacon, though he took gifts, did not take bribes, seems to us as futile as that which we have considered. Indeed, we might be content to leave it to be answered by the plainest man among our readers. Demosthenes noticed it with contempt more than two thousand years ago. Latimer, we have seen, treated this sophistry with similar disdain. "Leave coloring," said he, "and call these things by their Christian name, bribes." Mr. Montagu attempts, somewhat unfairly, we must say, to represent the presents which Bacon received as similar to the perquisites which suitors paid to the members of the Parliaments of France. The French magistrate had a legal right to his fee; and the amount of the fee was regulated by law. Whether this be a good mode of remunerating judges is not the question. But what analogy is there between payments of this sort and the presents which Bacon received, presents which were not sanctioned by the law, which were not made under the public eye, and of which the amount was regulated only by private bargain between the magistrate and the suitor?

Again, it is mere trifling to say that Bacon could not have meant to act corruptly because he employed the agency of men of rank, of

bishops, privy councillors, and members of Parliament; as if the whole history of that generation was not full of the low actions of high people; as if it was not notorious that men, as exalted in rank as any of the decoys that Bacon employed, had pimped for Somerset and poisoned Overbury.

But, says Mr. Montagu, these presents "were made openly and with the greatest publicity." This would indeed be a strong argument in favor of Bacon. But we deny the fact. In one, and one only, of the cases in which Bacon was accused of corruptly receiving gifts, does he appear to have received a gift publicly. This was in a matter depending between the Company of Apothecaries and the Company of Grocers. Bacon, in his Confession, insisted strongly on the circumstance that he had on this occasion taken a present publicly, as a proof that he had not taken it corruptly. Is it not clear, that, if he had taken the presents mentioned in the other charges in the same public manner, he would have dwelt on this point in his answer to those charges? The fact that he insists so strongly on the publicity of one particular present is of itself sufficient to prove that the other presents were not publicly taken. Why he took this present publicly and the rest secretly, is evident. He on that occasion acted openly, because he was acting honestly. He was not on that occasion sitting judicially. He was called in to effect an amicable arrangement between two parties. Both were satisfied with his decision. Both joined in making him a present in return for his trouble. Whether it was quite delicate in a man of his rank to accept a present under such circumstances, may be questioned. But there is no ground in this case for accusing him of corruption.

Unhappily, the very circumstances which prove him to have been innocent in this case prove him to have been guilty on the other

charges. Once, and once only, he alleges that he received a present publicly. The natural inference is that in all the other cases mentioned in the articles against him he received presents secretly. When we examine the single case in which he alleges that he received a present publicly, we find that it is also the single case in which there was no gross impropriety in his receiving a present. Is it then possible to doubt that his reason for not receiving other presents in as public a manner was that he knew that it was wrong to receive them?

One argument still remains, plausible in appearance, but admitting of easy and complete refutation. The two chief complainants, Aubrey and Egerton, had both made presents to the Chancellor. But he had decided against them both. Therefore, he had not received those presents as bribes. "The complaints of his accusers were," says Mr. Montagu, "not that the gratuities had, but that they had not influenced Bacon's judgment, as he had decided against them."

The truth is, that it is precisely in this way that an extensive system of corruption is generally detected. A person who, by a bribe, has procured a decree in his favor, is by no means likely to come forward of his own accord as an accuser. He is content. He has his *quid pro quo*. He is not impelled either by interested or by vindictive motives to bring the transaction before the public. On the contrary, he has almost as strong motives for holding his tongue as the judge himself can have. But when a judge practices corruption, as we fear that Bacon practiced it, on a large scale, and has many agents looking out in different quarters for prey, it will sometimes happen that he will be bribed on both sides. It will sometimes happen that he will receive money from suitors who are so obviously in the wrong that he can not with decency do anything to

serve them. Thus he will now and then be forced to pronounce against a person from whom he has received a present ; and he makes that person a deadly enemy. The hundreds who have got what they paid for remain quiet. It is the two or three who have paid, and have nothing to show for their money, who are noisy.

The memorable case of the Goëzmanns is an example of this. Beaumarchais had an important suit depending before the Parliament of Paris. M. Goëzman was the judge on whom chiefly the decision depended. It was hinted to Beaumarchais that Madame Goëzman might be propitiated by a present. He accordingly offered a purse of gold to the lady, who received it graciously. There can be no doubt that, if the decision of the court had been favorable to him, these things would never have been known to the world. But he lost his cause. Almost the whole sum which he had expended in bribery was immediately refunded ; and those who had disappointed him probably thought that he would not, for the mere gratification of his malevolence, make public a transaction which was discreditable to himself as well as to them. They knew little of him. He soon taught them to curse the day in which they had dared to trifle with a man of so revengeful and turbulent a spirit, of such dauntless effrontery, and of such eminent talents for controversy and satire. He compelled the Parliament to put a degrading stigma on M. Goëzman. He drove Madame Goëzman to a convent. Till it was too late to pause, his excited passions did not suffer him to remember that he could effect their ruin only by disclosures ruinous to himself. We could give other instances. But it is needless. No person well acquainted with human nature can fail to perceive that, if the doctrine for which Mr. Montagu contends, were admitted, society would be

deprived of almost the only chance which it has of detecting the corrupt practices of judges.

We return to our narrative. The sentence of Bacon had scarcely been pronounced when it was mitigated. He was indeed sent to the Tower. But this was merely a form. In two days he was set at liberty, and soon after he retired to Gorhambury. His fine was speedily released by the Crown. He was next suffered to present himself at Court ; and at length, in 1624, the rest of his punishment was remitted. He was now at liberty to resume his seat in the House of Lords, and he was actually summoned to the next Parliament. But age, infirmity, and perhaps shame, prevented him from attending. The Government allowed him a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year ; and his whole annual income is estimated by Mr. Montagu at two thousand five hundred pounds, a sum which was probably above the average income of a nobleman of that generation, and which was certainly sufficient for comfort and even for splendor. Unhappily, Bacon was fond of display, and unused to pay minute attention to domestic affairs. He was not easily persuaded to give up any part of the magnificence to which he had been accustomed in the time of his power and prosperity. No pressure of distress could induce him to part with the woods of Gorhambury. "I will not," he said, "be stripped of my feathers." He traveled with so splendid an equipage and so large a retinue that Prince Charles, who once fell in with him on the road, exclaimed with surprise, "Well ; do what we can, this man scorns to go out in snuff." This carelessness and ostentation reduced Bacon to frequent distress. He was under the necessity of parting with York House, and of taking up his residence, during his visits to London, at his old chambers in Gray's Inn. He had other vexations, the exact nature of which is unknown. It is evident from his will that some part of his

wife's conduct had greatly disturbed and irritated him.

But, whatever might be his pecuniary difficulties or his conjugal discomforts, the powers of his intellect still remained undiminished. Those noble studies for which he had found leisure in the midst of professional drudgery and of courtly intrigues gave to this last sad stage of his life a dignity beyond what power or titles could bestow. Impeached, convicted, sentenced, driven with ignominy from the presence of his Sovereign, shut out from the deliberations of his fellow nobles, loaded with debt, branded with dishonor, sinking under the weight of years, sorrows, and diseases, Bacon was Bacon still. "My conceit of his person," says Ben Jonson very finely, "was never increased towards him by his place of honors; but I have and do reverence him for the greatness that was only proper to himself; in that he seemed to me ever, by his work, one of the greatest men and most worthy of admiration, that had been in many ages. In his adversity I ever prayed that God would give him strength; for greatness he could not want."

The services which Bacon rendered to letters during the last five years of his life, amidst ten thousand distractions and vexations, increase the regret with which we think on the many years which he had wasted, to use the words of Sir Thomas Bodley, "on such study as was not worthy of such a student." He commenced a Digest of the Laws of England, a History of England under the Princes of the House of Tudor, a body of Natural History. Philosophical Romance. He made extensive and valuable additions to his Essays. He published the inestimable Treatise *De Augmentis Scientiarum*. The very trifles with which he amused himself in hours of pain and languor bore the mark of his mind. The best collections of jests in the world is that which he dictated from memory without referring to any

book, on a day on which illness had rendered him incapable of serious study.

The great apostle of experimental philosophy was destined to be its martyr. It had occurred to him that snow might be used with advantage for the purpose of preventing animal substances from putrefying. On a very cold day early in the spring of the year 1626, he alighted from his coach near Highgate, in order to try the experiment. He went into a cottage, bought a fowl, and with his own hands stuffed it with snow. While thus engaged he felt a sudden chill, and was soon so much indisposed that it was impossible for him to return to Gray's Inn. The Earl of Arundel, with whom he was well acquainted, had a house at Highgate. To that house Bacon was carried. The Earl was absent; but the servants who were in charge of the place showed great respect and attention to the illustrious guest. Here, after an illness of about a week, he expired early on the morning of Easter-day, 1626. His mind appears to have retained its strength and liveliness to the end. He did not forget the fowl which has caused his death. In the last letter that he wrote, with fingers which, as he said, could not steadily hold a pen, he did not omit to mention that the experiment of the snow had succeeded "excellently well."

Our opinion of the moral character of this great man has already been sufficiently explained. Had his life been passed in literary retirement, he would, in all probability, have deserved to be considered, not only as a great philosopher, but as a worthy and good-natured member of society. But neither his principles nor his spirits were such as could be trusted, when strong temptations were to be resisted, and serious dangers to be braved.

In his will he expressed with singular brevity, energy, dignity, and pathos, a mournful consciousness that his actions had not been such

as to entitle him to the esteem of those under whose observation his life had been passed, and at the same time a proud confidence that his writings had secured for him a high and permanent place among the benefactors of mankind. So at least we understand those striking words which have been often quoted, but which we must quote once more: "For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations, and to the next age."

His confidence was just. From the day of his death his fame has been constantly and steadily progressive; and we have no doubt that his name will be named with reverence to the latest ages, and to the remotest ends of the civilized world.

The chief peculiarity of Bacon's philosophy seems to us to have been this, that it aimed at things altogether different from those which his predecessors had proposed to themselves. This was his own opinion. "*Finis scientiarum*," says he, "*a nemine adhuc bene positus est*."* And again, "*Omnium gravissimus error in deviatione ab ultimo doctrinarum fine consistit*."† "*Nec ipsa meta*," says he elsewhere, "*adhuc ulli, quod sciam, mortalium posita est et defixa*."‡ The more carefully his works are examined, the more clearly, we think, it will appear that this is the real clue to the whole system, and that he used means different from those used by other philosophers, because he wished to arrive at an end altogether different from theirs.

What then was the end which Bacon proposed to himself? It was, to use his own emphatic expression, "fruit." It was the multiplying of human enjoyments and the mitigating of human sufferings. It was "the relief of man's

* *Novum Organum*. Lib. i Aph. 81.

† *De Augmentis*, Lib. i.

‡ *Cogitata et visa*.

estate.”* It was “commodis humanis inservire.”† It was “efficaciter operari ad sublevanda vitæ humanæ incommoda.”‡ It was “dotare vitam humanam annovis inventis et copiis.”§ It was “genus humanum novis operibus et potestatibus continuo dotare.”|| This was the object of all his speculations in every department of science, in natural philosophy, in legislation, in politics in morals.

Two words form the key of the Baconian doctrine, Utility and Progress. The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories; in attempts to solve insoluble enigmas; in exhortations to the attainment of unattainable frames of mind. It could not condescend to the humble office of ministering to the comfort of human beings. All the schools contemned that office as degrading; some censured it as immoral. Once indeed Posidonius, a distinguished writer of the age of Cicero and Cæsar, so far forgot himself as to enumerate, among the humbler blessings which mankind owed to philosophy, the discovery of the principle of the arch, and the introduction of the use of metals. This eulogy was considered as an affront, and was taken up with proper spirit. Seneca vehemently disclaims these insulting compliments.¶ Philosophy, according to him, has nothing to do with teaching men to rear arched roofs over their heads. The true philosopher does not care whether he has an arched roof or any roof. Philosophy has nothing to do with teaching men the uses of metals. She teaches us to be

* *Advancement of learning*, Book 1

† *De Augmentis*, Lib. 7 Cap. 1.

‡ *Ib.* Lib. 2 Cap. 2.

§ *Novum Organum*, Lib. 1 Aph. 81.

|| *Cogitata et visa*.

¶ *Seneca, Epist.* 90.

independent of all material substances, of all mechanical contrivances. The wise man lives according to nature. Instead of attempting to add to the physical comforts of his species, he regrets that his lot was not cast in that golden age when the human race had no protection against the cold but the skins of wild beasts, no screen from the sun but a cavern. To impute to such a man any share in the invention or improvement of a plough, a ship, or a mill, is an insult. "In my own time," says Seneca, "there have been inventions of this sort, transparent windows, tubes for diffusing warmth equally through all parts of a building, short-hand, which has been carried to such a perfection that a writer can keep pace with the most rapid speaker. But the inventing of such things is drudgery for the lowest slaves; philosophy lies deeper. It is not her office to teach men how to use their hands. The object of her lessons is to form the soul. *Non est, inquam, instrumentorum ad uses necessarios opifex.*" If the *non* were left out, this last sentence would be no bad description of the Baconian philosophy, and would, indeed, very much resemble several expressions in the *Novum Organum*. "We shall next be told," exclaims Seneca, "that the first shoemaker was a philosopher." For our own part, if we are forced to make our choice between the first shoemaker, and the author of the three books *On Anger*, we pronounce for the shoemaker. It may be worse to be angry than to be wet. But shoes have kept millions from being wet; and we doubt whether Seneca ever kept anybody from being angry.

It is very reluctantly that Seneca can be brought to confess that any philosopher had ever paid the smallest attention to anything that could possibly promote what vulgar people would consider as the well-being of mankind. He labors to clear Democritus from the disgraceful imputation of having made the first

arch, and Anacharsis from the charge of having contrived the potter's wheel. He is forced to own that such a thing might happen; and it may also happen, he tells us, that a philosopher may be swift of foot. But it is not in his character of philosopher that he either wins a race or invents a machine. No, to be sure. The business of a philosopher was to declaim in praise of poverty, with two millions sterling out at usury, to meditate epigrammatic conceits about the evils of luxury, in gardens which moved the envy of sovereigns, to rant about liberty, while fawning on the insolent and pampered freedom of a tyrant, to celebrate the divine beauty of virtue with the same pen which had just before written a defence of the murder of a mother by a son.

From the cant of this philosophy, a philosophy meanly proud of its own unprofitableness, it is delightful to turn to the letters of the great English teacher. We can almost forgive all the faults of Bacon's life when we read that singularly graceful and dignified passage: "Ego certe, ut de me ipso, quod res est, loquar, et in iis quæ nunc edo, et in iis quæ in posterum meditor, dignitatum ingenii et nominis mei, si qua sit, sæpius sciens et volens projicio, dum commodis humanis inserviam; quique architectus fortasse in philosophia et et scientiis esse debeam, etiam operarius, et bajulus, et quidvis demum fio, cum haud pauca quæ omnino fieri necesse sit, alii autem ob innatam superbiam subterfugiant, ipse sustineam et exsequar." * This *philanthropia*, which, as he said in one of the most remarkable of his early letters, "was so fixed in his mind, as it could not be removed," this majestic humility, this persuasion that nothing can be too insignificant for the attention of the wisest, which is not to insignificant to give pleasure or pain to the meanest, is the great charac-

* *De Augmentis* Lib. 7. Cap 1.

teristic distinction, the essential spirit of the Baconian philosophy. We trace it in all that Bacon has written on Physics, on Laws, on Morals. And we conceive that from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of his system directly and almost necessarily sprang.

The spirit which appears in the passage of Seneca to which we have referred, tainted the whole body of the ancient philosophy from the time of Socrates downwards, and took possession of intellects with which that of Seneca can not for a moment be compared. It pervades the dialogues of Plato. It may be distinctly traced in many parts of the works of Aristotle. Bacon has dropped hints, from which it may be inferred that, in his opinion, the prevalence of this feeling was in a great measure to be attributed to the influence of Socrates. Our great countryman evidently did not consider the revolution which Socrates effected in philosophy as a happy event, and constantly maintained that the earlier Greek speculators, Democritus in particular, were, on the whole, superior to their more celebrated successors.*

Assuredly if the tree which Socrates planted and Plato watered is to be judged of by its flowers and leaves, it is the noblest of trees. But if we take the homely test of Bacon, if we judge of the tree by its fruits, our opinion of it may perhaps be less favorable. When we sum up all the useful truths which we owe to that philosophy, to what do they amount? We find, indeed, abundant proofs that some of those who cultivated it were men of the first order of intellect. We find among their writings incomparable specimens both of dialectical and rhetorical art. We have no doubt that the ancient controversies were of use, in so far as they served to exercise the faculties of the disputants; for there is no controversy so idle that it may not

* *Novum Organum*, Lib. 1. Aph. 71, 79. *De Augmentis*, Lib. 3, Cap. 4. *De Principiis atque originibus Cogitata et visa*. Redargutio philosophiarum.

be of use in this way. But, when we look for something more, for something which adds to the comforts or alleviates the calamities of the human race, we are forced to own ourselves disappointed. We are forced to say with Bacon that this celebrated philosophy ended in nothing but disputation, that it was neither a vineyard nor an olive-ground, but an intricate wood of briars and thistles, from which those who lost themselves in it brought back many scratches and no food.*

We readily acknowledge that some of the teachers of this unfruitful wisdom were among the greatest men that the world has ever seen. If we admit the justice of Bacon's censure, we admit it with regret, similar to that which Dante felt when he learned the fate of those illustrious heathens who were doomed to the first circle of Hell.

“Gran duol mi prese al cuor quando lo 'ntesi,
Perocché gente di molto valore
Conobbi che 'n quel limbo eran sospesi.”

But in truth the very admiration which we feel for the eminent philosophers of antiquity forces us to adopt the opinion that their powers were systematically misdirected. For how else could it be that such powers should effect so little for mankind? A pedestrian may show as much muscular vigor on a treadmill as on the highway road. But on the road his vigor will assuredly carry him forward; and on the treadmill he will not advance an inch. The ancient philosophy was a treadmill, not a path. It was made up by revolving questions, of controversies which were always beginning again. It was a contrivance for having much exertion and no progress. We must acknowledge that more than once, while contemplating the doctrines of the Academy and the Portico, even as they appear in the transparent splen-

* *Novum Organum*, Lib. I. Aph. 73

dor of Cicero's incomparable diction, we have been tempted to mutter with the surly centurion in Persius, "Cur quis non prandeat hoc est?" What is the highest good, whether pain be an evil, whether all things be fated, whether we can be certain of anything, whether we can be certain that we are certain of nothing, whether a wise man can be unhappy, whether all departures from right be equally reprehensible, these, and other questions of the same sort, occupied the brains, the tongues, and the pens of the ablest men in the civilized world during several centuries. This sort of philosophy, it is evident, could not be progressive. It might indeed sharpen and invigorate the minds of those who devoted themselves to it; and so might the disputes of the orthodox Lilliputians and the heretical Blefuscutians about the big ends and the little ends of eggs. But such disputes could add nothing to the stock of knowledge. The human mind accordingly, instead of marching, merely marked time. It took as much trouble as would have sufficed to carry it forward, and yet remained on the same spot. There was no accumulation of truth, no heritage of truth acquired by the labor of one generation and bequeathed to another, to be again transmitted with larger additions to a third. Where this philosophy was in the time of Cicero, there it continued to be in the time of Seneca, and there it continued to be in the time of Favorinus. The same sects were still battling with the same unsatisfactory arguments about the same interminable questions. There had been no want of ingenuity, of zeal, of industry. Every trace of intellectual cultivation was there, except a harvest. There had been plenty of ploughing, harrowing, reaping, threshing. But the garners contained only smut and stubble.

The ancient philosophers did not neglect natural science; but they did not cultivate it for the purpose of increasing the power and ameliorating the condition of man. The taint

of barrenness had spread from ethical to physical speculations. Seneca wrote largely on natural philosophy, and magnified the importance of that study. But why? Not because it tended to assuage suffering, to multiply the conveniences of life, to extend the empire of man over the material world; but solely because it tended to raise the mind above low cares, to separate it from the body, to exercise its subtilty in the solution of very obscure questions.* Thus natural philosophy was considered in the light merely of a mental exercise. It was made subsidiary to the art of disputation; and it consequently proved altogether barren of useful discoveries.

There was one sect which, however absurd and pernicious some of its doctrines may have been, ought, it should seem, to have merited an exception from the general censure which Bacon has pronounced on the ancient schools of wisdom. The Epicurean, who referred all happiness to bodily pleasure; and all evil to bodily pain, might have been expected to exert himself for the purpose of bettering his own physical condition and that of his neighbors. But the thought seems never to have occurred to any member of that school. Indeed their notion, as reported by their great poet, was, that no more improvements were to be expected in the arts which conduce to the comfort of life.

“Ad victum quæ flagitat usus
Omnia jam ferme mortalibus esse parata.”

This contented despondency, this disposition to admire what had been done, and to expect that nothing more will be done, is strongly characteristic of all the schools which preceded the school of Fruit and Progress. Widely as the Epicurean and the Stoic differed on most points, they seemed to have quite agreed

* Seneca, *Nat. Quæst. præf. Lib. 3.*

in their contempt for pursuits so vulgar as to be useful. The philosophy of both was a garrulous, declaiming, canting, wrangling philosophy. Century after century they continued to repeat their hostile war-cries, Virtue and Pleasure; and in the end it appeared that the Epicurean had added as little to the quantity of pleasure as the Stoic to the quantity of virtue. It is on the pedestal of Bacon, not on that of Epicurus, that those noble lines ought to be inscribed :

“O tenebris tantis tam clarum extollere lumen
Qui primus potuisti, illustrans commoda vitæ.”

In the fifth century Christianity had conquered Paganism, and Paganism had infected Christianity. The Church was now victorious and corrupt. The rites of the Pantheon had passed into her worship, the subtilties of the Academy into her creed. In an evil day, though with great pomp and solemnity,—we quote the language of Bacon,—was the ill-starred alliance stricken between the old philosophy and the new faith.* Questions widely different from those which had employed the ingenuity of Pyrrho and Carneades, but just as subtle, just as interminable, and just as unprofitable, exercised the minds of the lively and voluble Greeks. When learning began to revive in the West, similar trifles occupied the sharp and vigorous intellects of the Schoolmen. There was another sowing of the wind, and another reaping of the whirlwind. The great work of improving the condition of the human race was still considered as unworthy of a man of learning. Those who undertook that task, if what they effected could be readily comprehended, were despised as mechanics; if not, they were in danger of being burned as conjurers.

There cannot be a stronger proof of the degree in which the human mind had been mis-

* *Cogitata et visa.*

directed than the history of the two greatest events which took place during the middle ages. We speak of the invention of Gunpowder and of the invention of Printing. The dates of both are unknown. The authors of both are unknown. Nor was this because men were too rude and ignorant to value intellectual superiority. The inventor of gunpowder seems to have been contemporary with Petrarch and Boccaccio. The inventor of printing was certainly contemporary with Nicholas the Fifth, with Cosmo de' Medici, and with a crowd of distinguished scholars. But the human mind still retained that fatal bent which it had received two thousand years earlier. George of Trebisond and Marsilio Ficino would not easily have been brought to believe that the inventor of the printing-press had done more for mankind than themselves, or than those ancient writers of whom they were the enthusiastic votaries.

At length the time arrived when the barren philosophy which had, during so many ages, employed the faculties of the ablest of men, was destined to fall. It had worn many shapes. It had mingled itself with many creeds. It had survived revolutions in which empires, religions, languages, races, had perished. Driven from its ancient haunts, it had taken sanctuary in that Church which it had persecuted, and had, like the daring fiends of the poet, placed its seat

“next the seat of God,
And with its darkness dared affront his light.”

Words, and more words, and nothing but words, had been all the fruit of all the toil of all the most renowned sages of sixty generations. But the days of this sterile exuberance were numbered.

Many causes predisposed the public mind to a change. The study of a great variety of an-

cient writers, though it did not give a right direction to philosophical research, did much towards destroying that blind reverence for authority which had prevailed when Aristotle ruled alone. The rise of the Florentine sect of Platonists, a sect to which belonged some of the finest minds of the fifteenth century, was not an unimportant event. The mere substitution of the Academic for the Peripatetic philosophy would indeed have done little good. But anything was better than the old habit of unreasoning servility. It was something to have a choice of tyrants. "A spark of freedom," as Gibbon has justly remarked, "was produced by this collision of adverse servitude."

Other causes might be mentioned. But it is chiefly to the great reformation of religion that we owe the great reformation of philosophy. The alliance between the Schools and the Vatican had for ages been so close that those who threw off the dominion of the Vatican could not continue to recognize the authority of the Schools. Most of the chiefs of the schism treated the Peripatetic philosophy with contempt, and spoke of Aristotle as if Aristotle had been answerable for all the dogmas of Thomas Aquinas. "*Nulio apud Lutheranos philosophiam esse in pretio*," was a reproach which the defenders of the Church of Rome loudly repeated, and which many of the Protestant leaders considered as a compliment. Scarcely any text was more frequently cited by the reformers than that in which St. Paul cautions the Collossians not to let any man spoil them by philosophy. Luther, almost at the onset of his career, went so far as to declare that no man could be at once a proficient in the school of Aristotle and in that of Christ. Zwingle, Bucer, Peter Martyr, Calvin, held similar language. In some of the Scotch universities, the Aristotlean system was discarded for that of Ramus. Thus, before the birth of Bacon, the empire of the

scholastic philosophy had been shaken to its foundations. There was in the intellectual world an anarchy resembling that which in the political world often follows the overthrow of an old and deeply-rooted government. Antiquity, prescription, the sound of great names, had ceased to awe mankind. The dynasty which had reigned for ages was at an end: and the vacant throne was left to be struggled for by pretenders.

The first effect of this great revolution, was, as Bacon most justly observed,* to give for a time an undue importance to the mere graces of style. The new breed of scholars, the Aschams and Buchanans, nourished with the finest compositions of the Augustan age, regarded with loathing the dry, crabbed, and barbarous diction of respondents and opponents. They were far less studious about the matter of their writing than about the manner. They succeeded in reforming Latinity; but they never even aspired to effect a reform in philosophy.

At this time Bacon appeared. It is altogether incorrect to say, as has often been said, that he was the first man who rose up against the Aristotelean philosophy when in the height of its power. The authority of that philosophy had, as we have shown, received a fatal blow long before he was born. Several speculators, among whom Ramus is the best known, had recently attempted to form new sects. Bacon's own expressions about the state of public opinion in the time of Luther are clear and strong; "Accedebat," says he, "odium et contemptus, illis ipsis temporibus ortus erga Scholasticos." And again, "Scholasticorum doctrina despectui prorsus haberi cœpit tanquam aspera et barbara."† The part which Bacon played in this great change was the part, not

* *De Augmentis*, Lib 1.

† Both these passages are in the first book of *De Augmentis*.

of Robespierre, but of Bonaparte. The ancient order of things had been subverted. Some bigots still cherished with devoted loyalty the remembrance of the fallen monarchy, and exerted themselves to effect a restoration. But the majority had so such feeling. Freed, yet not knowing how to use their freedom, they pursued no determinate course, and had found no leader capable of conducting them.

That leader at length arose. The philosophy which he taught was essentially new. It differed from that of the celebrated ancient teachers, not merely in method, but also in object. Its object was the good of mankind, in the sense in which the mass of mankind always have understood and always will understand the word good. "Meditor," said Bacon, "instauracionem philosophiæ ejusmodi quæ nihil inanis aut abstracti habeat, quæque vitæ humanæ conditiones in meius provehat." *

The difference between the philosophy of Bacon and that of his predecessors cannot, we think, be better illustrated than by comparing his views on some important subjects with those of Plato. We select Plato, because we conceive that he did more than any other person towards giving to the minds of speculative men that bent which they retained till they received from Bacon a new impulse in a diametrically opposite direction.

It is curious to observe how differently these great men estimated the value of every kind of knowledge. Take Arithmetic for example. Plato, after speaking slightly of the convenience of being able to reckon and compute in the ordinary transactions of life, passes to what he considers as far more important advantage. The study of the properties of numbers, he tells us, habituates the mind to the contemplation of pure truth, and raises us above the material universe. He would have his disciples apply

* *Redargutio Philosophiarum.*

themselves to this study, not that they may be able to buy or sell, not that they may qualify themselves to be shop-keepers or travelling merchants, but that they may learn to withdraw their minds from the ever-shifting spectacle of this visible and tangible world, and to fix them on the immutable essences of things.*

Bacon, on the other hand, valued this branch of knowledge, only on account of its uses with reference to that visible and tangible world which Plato so much despised. He speaks with scorn of the mystical arithmetic of the later Platonists, and laments the propensity of mankind to employ, on mere matters of curiosity, powers the whole exertion of which is required for purposes of solid advantage. He advises arithmeticians to leave these trifles, and to employ themselves in framing convenient expressions, which may be of use in physical researches. †

The same reasons which led Plato to recommend the study of arithmetic led him to recommend also the study of mathematics. The vulgar crowd of geometricians, he says, will not understand him. They have practice always in view. They do not know that the real use of the science is to lead men to the knowledge of abstract, essential, eternal truth. ‡ Indeed, if we are to believe Plutarch, Plato carried this feeling so far that he considered geometry as degraded by being applied to any purpose of vulgar utility. Archytas, it seems, had framed machines of extraordinary power on mathematical principles.§ Plato remonstrated with his friend, and declared that this was to degrade a noble intellectual exercise into a low craft, fit only for carpenters and wheelwrights. The office of geometry, he said, was to disci-

* Plato's *Republic*, Book 7.

† *De Augmentis*, Lib. 3. Cap. 6.

‡ Plato's *Republic* Book 7.

§ Plutarch, *Sympos.* viii, and *life of Marcellus*. The machines of Archytas are also mentioned by Aulus Gellius and Diogenes Laertius.

pline the mind, not to minister to the base wants of the body. His interference was successful ; and from that time, according to Plutarch, the science of mechanics was considered as unworthy of the attention of a philosopher.

Archimedes in a later age imitated and surpassed Archytas. But even Archimedes was not free from the prevailing notion that geometry degraded by being employed to produce anything useful. It was with difficulty that he was indeed to stoop from speculation to practice. He was half ashamed of those inventions which were the wonder of hostile nations, and always spoke of them slightly as mere amusements, as trifles in which a mathematician might be suffered to relax his mind after intense application to the higher parts of his science.

The opinion of Bacon on this subject was diametrically opposed to that of the ancient philosophers. He valued geometry chiefly, if not solely, on account of those uses, which to Plato appeared so base. And it is remarkable that the longer Bacon lived the stronger this feeling became. When in 1605 he wrote the two books on the Advancement of Learning, he dwelt on the advantages which mankind derived from mixed mathematics ; but he at the same time admitted that the beneficial effect produced by mathematical study on the intellect, though a collateral advantage, was " no less worthy than that which was principal and intended." But it is evident that his views underwent a change. When, near twenty years later, he published the *De Augmentis*, which is the Treatise on the Advancement of Learning, greatly expanded and carefully corrected, he made important alterations in the part which related to mathematics. He condemned with severity the high pretensions of the mathematicians, "*delicias et fastum mathematicorum.*" Assuming the well-being of the human race to be the end of knowledge,* he

* *Usui et commodis hominum consulimus,*

pronounced that mathematical science could claim no higher rank than that of an appendage or an auxiliary to other sciences. Mathematical science, he says, is the handmaid of natural philosophy; she ought to demean herself as such; and he declares that he cannot conceive by what ill chance it has happened that she presumes to claim precedence over her mistress. He predicts—a prediction which would have made Plato shudder—that as more and more discoveries are made in physics, there will be more and more branches of mixed mathematics. Of that collateral advantage the value of which, twenty years before, he rated so highly, he says not one word. This omission cannot have been the effect of mere inadvertence. His own treatise was before him. From that treatise he deliberately expunged whatever was favorable to the study of pure mathematics, and inserted several keen reflections on the ardent votaries of that study. This fact, in our opinion, admits of only one explanation. Bacon's love of those pursuits which directly tend to improve the condition of mankind, and his jealousy of all pursuits merely curious, had grown upon him, and had, it may be, become immoderate. He was afraid of using any expression which might have the effect of inducing any man of talents to employ in speculations, useful only to the mind of the speculator, a single hour which might be employed in extending the empire of man over matter.* If Bacon erred here, we must acknowledge that we greatly prefer his error to the opposite error of Plato. We have no patience with a philosophy which, like those Roman matrons who swallowed abortives in order to preserve their shapes, take pains to be barren for fear of being homely.

Let us pass to astronomy. This was one of

* Compare the passage relating to mathematics in the Second Book of the Advancement of Learning, with the *De Augmentis*, Lib. 3, Cap. 6.

the sciences which Plato exhorted his disciples to learn, but for reasons far removed from common habits of thinking. "Shall we set down astronomy," says Socrates, "among the subjects of study?" * "I think so," answered his young friend Glaucon: "to know something about the seasons, the months, and the years is of use for military purposes, as well as for agriculture and navigation." "It amuses me," says Socrates, "to see how afraid you are, lest the common herd of people should accuse you of recommending useless studies. He then proceeds, in that pure and magnificent diction which, as Cicero said, Jupiter would use if Jupiter spoke Greek, to explain that the use of astronomy is not to add to the vulgar comforts of life, but to assist in raising the mind to the contemplation of things which are to be perceived by the pure intellect alone. The knowledge of the actual motions of the heavenly bodies Socrates considers as of little value. The appearances which make the sky beautiful at night are, he tells us, like the figures which a geometrician draws on the sand, mere examples, mere helps to feeble minds. We must get beyond them; we must neglect them; we must attain to an astronomy which is as independent of the actual stars as geometrical truth is independent of the lines of an ill-drawn diagram. This is, we imagine, very nearly, if not exactly, the astronomy which Bacon compared to the ox of Prometheus,† a sleek, well-shaped hide, stuffed with rubbish, goodly to look at, but containing nothing to eat. He complained that astronomy had, to its great injury, been separated from natural philosophy, of which it was one of the noblest provinces, and annexed to the domain of mathematics. The world stood in need, he said, of a very different astronomy, of a living astronomy,‡ of an astronomy which should set forth

* Plato's *Republic*, Book 7.

† *De Augmentis*. Lib 3, Cap. 4. ‡ *Astronomia vina*,

the nature, the motion, and the influences of the heavenly bodies, as they really are.*

On the greatest and most useful of all human inventions, the invention of alphabetical writing, Plato did not look with much complacency. He seems to have thought that the use of letters had operated on the human mind as the use of the go-cart in learning to walk, or of corks in learning to swim, is said to operate on the human body. It was a support which, in his opinion, soon became indispensable to those who used it, which made vigorous exertion first unnecessary and then impossible. The powers of the intellect would, he conceived, have been more fully developed without this delusive aid. Men would have been compelled to exercise the understanding and the memory, and, by deep and assiduous meditation, to make truth thoroughly their own. Now, on the contrary, much knowledge is traced on paper, but little is engraved in the soul. A man is certain that he can find information at a moment's notice when he wants it. He therefore suffers it to fade from his mind. Such a man cannot in strictness be said to know anything. He has the show without the reality of wisdom. These opinions Plato has put into the mouth of an ancient king of Egypt.† But it is evident from the context that they were his own; and so they were understood to be by Quintilian.‡ Indeed they are in perfect accordance with the whole Platonic system.

Bacon's views, as may easily be supposed, were widely different.§ The powers of the memory, he observed, without the help of writing, can do little towards the advancement of any useful science. He acknowledges that

* "Quæ substantiam et motum et influxum cœlestium prout re vera sunt preponat." Compare this language with Plato's, "τὰ δ' ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ ἑᾶσμεν."

† Plato's *Phædrus*.

‡ Quintilian, XI.

§ *De Augmentis*, Lib. 5. Cap. 5.

the memory may be disciplined to such a point as to be able to perform very extraordinary feats. But on such feats he sets little value. The habits of his mind, he tells us, are such that he is not disposed to rate highly any accomplishment, however rare which is of no practical use to mankind. As to these prodigious achievements of the memory, he ranks them with the exhibitions of rope-dancers and tumblers. "The two performances," he says, "are of much the same sort. The one is an abuse of the powers of the body; the other is an abuse of the powers of the mind. Both may perhaps excite our wonder; but neither is entitled to our respect."

To Plato, the science of medicine appeared to be of very disputable advantage.* He did not indeed object to quick cures for the acute disorders, or for injuries produced by accidents. But the art which resists the slow sap of a chronic disease, which repairs frames enervated lust, swollen by gluttony, or inflamed by wine, by which encourages sensuality by mitigating the natural punishment of the sensualist, and prolongs existence when the intellect has ceased to retain its entire energy, had no share of his esteem. A life protracted by medical skill he pronounced to be a long death. The existence of the art of medicine ought, he said, to be tolerated, so far as that art may serve to cure the occasional distempers of men whose constitutions are good. As to those who have bad constitutions, let them die; and the sooner the better. Such men are unfit for war, for magistracy, for the management of their domestic affairs, for severe study and speculation. If they engage in any vigorous mental exercise, they are troubled with giddiness and fulness of the head, all which they lay to the account of philosophy. The best thing that can happen to such wretches is to have done with life at

* Plato's *Republic*, Book 3.

once. He quotes mythical authority in support of this doctrine; and reminds his disciples that the practice of the sons of *Æsculapius*, as described by Homer, extended only to the cure of external injuries.

Far different was the philosophy of Bacon. Of all the sciences, that which he seems to have regarded with the greatest interest was the science which, in Plato's opinion, would not be tolerated in a well regulated community. To make men perfect was no part of Bacon's plan. His humble aim was to make imperfect men comfortable. The beneficence of his philosophy resembled the beneficence of the common Father, whose sun rises on the evil and the good, whose rain descends for the just and the unjust. In Plato's opinion man was made for philosophy; in Bacon's opinion philosophy was made for man; it was a means to an end; and that end was to increase the pleasures and to mitigate the pains of millions who are not and cannot be philosophers. That a valetudinarian who took great pleasure in being wheeled along his terrace, who relished his boiled chicken and his weak wine and water, and who enjoyed a hearty laugh over the Queen of Navarre's tales, should be treated as a *caput lupinum* because he could not read the *Timæus* without a headache, was a notion which the humane spirit of the English schools of wisdom altogether rejected. Bacon would not have thought it beneath the dignity of a philosopher to contrive an improved garden chair for such a valetudinarian, to devise some way of rendering his medicines more palatable, to invent repasts which he might enjoy, and pillows on which he might sleep soundly; and this though there might not be the smallest hope that the mind of the poor invalid would ever rise to the contemplation of the ideal beautiful and the ideal good. As Plato had cited the religious legends of Greece to justify his contempt for the more recondite parts of

the art of healing, Bacon vindicated the dignity of that art by appealing to the example of Christ, and reminded men that the great Physician of the soul did not disdain to be also the physician of the body.*

When we pass from the science of medicine to that of legislation, we find the same difference between the systems of these two great men. Plato, at the commencement of the Dialogue on laws, lays it down as a fundamental principle that the end of legislation is to make men virtuous. It is unnecessary to point out the extravagant conclusions to which such a proposition leads. Bacon well knew to how great an extent the happiness of every society must depend on the virtue of its members; and he also knew what legislators can and what they cannot do for the purpose of promoting virtue. The view which he has given of the end of legislation, and of the principal means for the attainment of that end, has always seemed to us eminently happy, even among the many happy passages of the same kind with which his works abound. "*Finis et scopus quem leges intueri atque ad quem iustiones et sanctiones suas dirigere debent, non alius est quam ut cives feliciter degant. Id fiet si pietate et religione recte instituti, moribus honesti, armis adversus hostes externos tuti, legum auxilio adversus seditiones et privatas injurias muniti, imperio et magistratibus obsequentes, copiis et opibus locupletes et florentes fuerint.*"* The end is the well-being of the people. The means are the imparting of moral and religious education; the providing of everything necessary for defence against foreign enemies; the maintaining of internal order; the establishing of a judicial, financial, and commercial system, under which wealth may be rapidly accumulated and securely enjoyed.

* *De Augmentis*, Lib. 4. Cap. 2.

† *Ibid.*, Lib. 8 Cap. 3, Aph. 5.

Even with respect to the form in which laws ought to be drawn, there is a remarkable difference of opinion between the Greek and the Englishman. Plato thought a preamble essential; Bacon thought it mischievous. Each was consistent with himself. Plato, considering the moral improvement of the people as the end of legislation, justly inferred that a law which commanded and threatened, but which neither convinced the reason, nor touched the heart, must be a most imperfect law. He was not content with deterring from theft a man who still continued to be a thief at heart, with restraining a son who hated his mother from beating his mother. The only obedience on which he set much value was the obedience which an enlightened understanding yields to reason, and which a virtuous disposition yields to precepts of virtue. He really seems to have believed that, by prefixing to every law an eloquent and pathetic exhortation, he should to a great extent, render penal enactments superfluous. Bacon entertained no such romantic hopes; and he well knew the practical inconveniences of the course which Plato recommended. "*Neque nobis,*" says he, "*prologi legum qui inepti olim habiti sunt, et legis introducunt disputantes non jubentes, utique placerent, si priscos mores ferre possemus.*" * * * * "*Quantum fieri potest prologi evitentur, et lex incipiat a jussione.*" *

Each of the great men whom we have compared intended to illustrate his system by a philosophical romance; and each left his romance imperfect. Had Plato lived to finish the *Critias*, a comparison between that noble fiction and the new Atlantis would probably have furnished us with still more striking instances than any which we have given. It is amusing to think with what horror he would have seen such an institution as Solomon's

* *DeAugmentis*, Aph. 69.

House rising in his republic ; with what vehemence he would have ordered the brew-houses, the perfume houses, and the dispensatories to be pulled down ; and with what inexorable rigor he would have driven beyond the frontier all the Fellows of the College, Merchants of Light and Depredators, Lamps and Pioneers.

To sum up the whole, we should say that the aim of the Platonic philosophy was to exalt man into a god. The aim of the Baconian philosophy was to provide man with what he requires while he continues to be man. The aim of the Platonic philosophy was to raise us far above vulgar wants. The aim of the Baconian philosophy was to supply our vulgar wants. The former aim was noble ; but the latter was attainable. Plato drew a good bow ; but, like Acestes in Virgil, he aimed at the stars ; and, therefore, though there was no want of strength or skill, the shot was thrown away. His arrow was indeed followed by a track of dazzling radiance, but it struck nothing.

*" Volans liquidis in nubibus arsit arundo
Signavitque viam flammis, tenuisque recessit
Consumpta in ventos."*

Bacon fixed his eye on a mark which was placed on the earth, and within bow-shot, and hit it in the white. The philosophy of Plato began in words and ended in words, noble words indeed, words such as were to be expected from the finest of human intellects exercising boundless dominion over the finest of human languages. The philosophy of Bacon began in observations and ended in arts.

The boast of the ancient philosophers was that their doctrine formed the minds of men to a high degree of wisdom and virtue. This was indeed the only practical good which the most celebrated of those teachers even pretended to effect ; and undoubtedly, if they had effected this, they would have deserved far higher praise than if they had discovered the most salutary

medicines or constructed the most powerful machines. But the truth is that, in those very matters in which alone they professed to do any good to mankind, in those very matters for the sake of which they neglected all the vulgar interests of mankind, they did nothing, or worse than nothing. They promised what was impracticable ; they despised what was practicable ; they filled the world with long words and long beards ; and they left it as wicked and as ignorant as they found it.

An acre in Middlesex is better than a principality in Utopia. The smallest actual good is better than the most magnificent promises of impossibilities. The wise man of the Stoics would, no doubt, be a grander object than a steam-engine. But there are steam-engines. And the wise man of the Stoics is yet to be born. A philosophy which should enable a man to feel perfectly happy while in agonies of pain would be better than a philosophy which assuages pain. But we know that there are remedies which will assuage pain ; and we know that the ancient sages like the tooth-ache just as little as their neighbors. A philosophy which should extinguish cupidity would be better than a philosophy which should devise laws for the security of property. But it is possible to make laws which shall, to a very great extent secure property. And we do not understand how any motives which the ancient philosopher furnished could extinguish cupidity. We know indeed that the philosophers were no better than other men. From the testimony of friends as well as of foes, from the confessions of Epictetus and Seneca, as well as from the sneers of Lucian and the fierce invectives of Juvenal, it is plain that these teachers of virtue had all the vices of their neighbors, with the additional vice of hypocrisy. Some people may think the object of the Baconian philosophy a low object, but they cannot deny that, high or low, it has been attained. They cannot

deny that every year makes an addition to what Bacon called "fruit." They cannot deny that mankind have made, and are making, great and constant progress in the road which he pointed out to them. Was there any such progressive movement among the ancient philosophers? After they had been declaiming eight hundred years, had they made the world better than when they began? Our belief is that, among the philosophers themselves, instead of a progressive improvement there was a progressive degeneracy. An abject superstition which Democritus or Anaxagoras would have rejected with scorn added the last disgrace to the long dotage of the Stoic and Platonic schools. Those unsuccessful attempts to articulate which are so delightful and interesting in a child shock and disgust us in an aged paralytic; and in the same way, those wild mythological fictions which charm us when we hear them lisped by Greek poetry in its infancy, excite a mixed sensation of pity and loathing when mumbled by Greek philosophy in its old age. We know that guns, cutlery, spy-glasses, clocks, are better in our time than they were in the time of our fathers, and were better in the time of our fathers than they were in the time of our grandfathers. We might, therefore be inclined to think that, when a philosophy which boasted that its object was the elevation and purification of the mind, and which for this object neglected the sordid office of ministering to the comforts of the body, had flourished in the highest honor during many hundreds of years, a vast moral amelioration must have taken place. Was it so? Look at the schools of this wisdom four centuries before the Christian era and four centuries after that era. Compare the men whom those schools formed at those two periods. Compare Plato and Libanius. Compare Pericles and Julian. This philosophy confessed, nay boasted, that for

every end but one it was useless. Had it attained that one end?

Suppose that Justinian, when he closed the schools of Athens, had called on the last few sages who still haunted the Portico, and lingered round the ancient plane-trees, to show their title to public veneration: suppose that he had said, "A thousand years have elapsed since, in this famous city, Socrates posed Protagoras and Hippias; during those thousand years a large proportion of the ablest men of every generation has been employed in constant efforts to bring to perfection the philosophy which you teach; that philosophy has been munificently patronized by the powerful; its professors have been held in the highest esteem by the public; it has drawn to itself almost all the sap and vigor of the human intellect: and what has it effected? What profitable truth has it taught us which we should not equally have known without it? What has it enabled us to do which we should not have been equally able to do without it?" Such questions, we suspect, would have puzzled Simplicius and Isidore. Ask a follower of Bacon what the new philosophy, as it was called in the time of Charles the Second, has effected for mankind, and his answer is ready: "It has lengthened life; it has mitigated pain; it has extinguished diseases; it has increased the fertility of the soil; it has given new securities to the mariner; it has furnished new arms to the warrior; it has spanned great rivers and estuaries with bridges of form unknown to our fathers; it has guided the thunderbolt innocuously from heaven to earth; it has lighted up the night with the splendor of the day; it has extended the range of the human vision; it has multiplied the power of the human muscles; it has accelerated motion; it has annihilated distance; it has facilitated intercourse, correspondence, all friendly offices, all despatch of business; it

has enabled man to descend to the depths of the sea, to soar into the air, to penetrate securely into the noxious recesses of the earth, to traverse the land in cars which whirl along without horses, and the ocean in ships which run ten knots an hour against the wind. These are but a part of its fruits, and of its first fruits. For it is a philosophy which never rests, which has never attained, which is never perfect. Its law is progress. A point which yesterday was invisible is its goal to-day, and will be its starting-post to-morrow."

Great and various as the powers of Bacon were, he owes his wide and durable fame chiefly to this, that all those powers received their direction from common sense. His love of the vulgar useful, his strong sympathy with the popular notions of good and evil, and the openness with which he avowed that sympathy, are the secret of his influence. There was in his system no cant, no illusion. He had no anointing for broken bones, no fine theories *de finibus*, no arguments to persuade men out of their senses. He knew that men, and philosophers as well as other men, do actually love life, health, comfort, honor, security, the society of friends, and do actually dislike death, sickness, pain, poverty, disgrace, danger, separation from those to whom they are attached. He knew that religion, though it often regulates and moderates these feelings, seldom eradicates them; nor did he think it desirable for mankind that they should be eradicated. The plan of eradicating them by conceits like those of Seneca, or syllogisms like those of Chrysippus, was too preposterous to be for a moment entertained by a mind like his. He did not understand what wisdom there could be in changing names where it was impossible to change things; in denying that blindness, hunger, the gout, the rack, were evils, and calling them ἀποπροήγμενα; in refusing to acknowledge that health, safety, plenty, were

good things, and dubbing them by the name of *ἀδιάφορα*. In his opinions on all these subjects, he was not a Stoic, nor an Epicurean, nor an Academic, but what would have been called by Stoics, Epicureans, and Academics, a mere *ιδιώτης*, a mere common man. And it was precisely because he was so that his name makes so great an era in the history of the world. It was because he dug deep that he was able to pile high. It was because, in order to lay his foundations, he went down into those parts of human nature which lie low, but which are not liable to change, that the fabric which he reared has risen to so stately an elevation, and stands with such immovable strength.

We have sometimes thought that an amusing fiction might be written, in which a disciple of Epictetus and a disciple of Bacon should be introduced as fellow-travellers. They come to a village where the small-pox has just begun to rage, and find houses shut up, intercourse suspended, the sick abandoned, mothers weeping in terror over their children. The Stoic assures the dismayed population that there is nothing bad in the small-pox, and that to a wise man, disease, deformity, death, the loss of friends are not evils. The Baconian takes out a lancet and begins to vaccinate. They find a body of miners in great dismay. An explosion of noisome vapors has just killed many of those who were at work; and the survivors are afraid to venture into the cavern. The Stoic assures them that such an accident is nothing but a mere *ἀποπροημιμενον*. The Baconian, who has no such fine word at his command, contents himself with devising a safety-lamp. They find a ship-wrecked merchant wringing his hands on the shore. His vessel with an inestimable cargo has just gone down, and he is reduced in a moment from opulence to beggary. The Stoic exhorts him not to seek happiness in things which lie without himself and repeats the whole chapter of Epictetus *προς τοὺς τῆν*

αποριαν δεδοικότας. The Baconian constructs a diving-bell, goes down in it, and returns with the most precious effects from the wreck. It would be easy to multiply illustrations of the difference between the philosophy of thorns and the philosophy of fruit, the philosophy of words and the philosophy of works.

Bacon has been accused of overrating the importance of those sciences which minister to the physical well-being of man, and of underrating the importance of moral philosophy; and it cannot be denied that persons who read the *Novum Organum* and the *De Augmentis*, without adverting to the circumstances under which those works were written, will find much that may seem to countenance the accusation. It is certain, however, that though in practice he often went very wrong, and though, as his historical work and his essays prove, he did not hold, even in theory, very strict opinions on points of political morality, he was far too wise a man not to know how much our well-being depends on the regulation of our minds. The world for which he wished was not, as some people seem to imagine, a world of water-wheels, power-looms, steam-carriages, sensualists, and knaves. He would have been as ready as Zeno himself to maintain that no bodily comforts which could be devised by the skill and labor of a hundred generations would give happiness to a man whose mind was under the tyranny of licentious appetite, of envy, of hatred, or of fear. If he sometimes appeared to ascribe importance too exclusively to the arts which increase the outward comforts of our species, the reason is plain. Those arts had been most unduly depreciated. They had been represented as unworthy the attention of a man of liberal education. "Cogitavit," says Bacon of himself, "eam esse opinionem sive æstimationem humidam et damnosam, minui nempe majestatem mentis humanæ, si in experimentis et rebus particularibus, sensui subjectis, et in

materia terminatis, diu ac multum versetur; præsertim cum hujusmodi res ad inquirendum laboriosæ ad meditandum ignobiles, ad discendum asperæ, ad practicam illiberales, numero infinitæ, et subtilitate pusillæ videri soleant, et ob hujusmodi conditiones, gloriæ artium minus sint accommodatæ.”* This opinion seemed to him “omnia in familia humana turbasse.” It had undoubtedly caused many arts which were of the greatest utility, and which were susceptible of the greatest improvements, to be neglected by speculators, and abandoned to joiners, masons, smiths, weavers, apothecaries. It was necessary to assert the dignity of those arts, to bring them prominently forward, to proclaim that, as they have a most serious effect on human happiness, they are not unworthy of the attention of the highest human intellects. Again, it was by illustrations drawn from these arts that Bacon could most easily illustrate his principles. It was by improvements effected in these arts that the soundness of his principles could be most speedily and decisively brought to the test, and made manifest to common understandings. He acted like a wise commander who thins every other part of his line to strengthen a point where the enemy is attacking with peculiar fury, and on the fate of which the event of the battle seems likely to depend. In the *Novum Organum*, however, he distinctly and most truly declares that his philosophy is no less a Moral than a Natural Philosophy, that, though his illustrations are drawn from physical science, the principles which those illustrations are intended to explain are just as applicable to ethical and political inquiries as to inquiries into the nature of heat and vegetation.†

* *Cogitata et Visa*. The expression *opinio humida* may surprise a reader not accustomed to Bacon's style. The allusion is to the maxim of Heraclitus, the obscure: “Dry light is the best.” By dry light, Bacon understood the light of the intellect, not obscured by the mists of passion, interest, or prejudice.

† *Novum Organum*, Lib. 1, Aph. 127.

He frequently treated of moral subjects; and he brought to those subjects that spirit which was the essence of his whole system. He has left us many admirable practicable observations on what he somewhat quaintly called the Georgics of the mind, on the mental culture which tends to produce good dispositions. Some persons, he said, might accuse him of spending labor on a matter so simple that his predecessors had passed it by with contempt. He desired such persons to remember that he had from the first announced the objects of his search to be not the splendid and the surprising, but the useful and the true; not the deluding dreams which go forth through the shining portals of ivory, but the humbler realities of the gate of horn.*

True to this principle, he indulged in no rants about the fitness of things, the all-sufficiency of virtue, and the dignity of human nature. He dealt not at all in resounding nothings, such as those with which Bolingbroke pretended to comfort himself in exile, and in which Cicero vainly sought consolation after the loss of Tullia. The casuistical subtilties which occupied the attention of the keenest spirits of his age had, it should seem, no attractions for him. The doctors whom Escobar afterwards compared to the four beasts and the four-and-twenty elders in the Apocalypse Bacon dismissed with most contemptuous brevity. "Inanes plerumque evadunt et futiles."† Nor did he ever meddle with those enigmas which have puzzled hundreds of generations, and will puzzle hundreds more. He said nothing about the grounds of moral obligation, or the freedom of the human will. He had no inclination to employ himself in labors resembling those of the damned in the Grecian Tartarus, to spin forever on the same wheel round the same pivot, to gape forever after the

* *De Augmentis*, Lib. 7, Cap. 3.

† *Ib.*, Lib. 7, Cap. 2.

same deluding clusters, to pour water forever into the same bottomless buckets, to pace forever to and fro on the same wearisome path after the same recoiling stone. He exhorted his disciples to prosecute researches of a very different description, to consider moral science as a practical science of which the object was to cure the diseases and perturbations of the mind, and which could be improved only by a method analogous to that which has improved medicine and surgery. Moral philosophers ought, he said, to set themselves vigorously to work for the purpose of discovering what are the actual effects produced on the human character by particular modes of education, by the indulgence of particular habits, by the study of particular books, by society, by emulation, by imitation. Then we might hope to find out what mode of training was most likely to preserve and restore moral health.*

What he was as a natural philosopher and a moral philosopher, that he was also as a theologian. He was, we are convinced, a sincere believer in the divine authority of the Christian revelation. Nothing can be found in his writings, or in any other writings, more eloquent and pathetic than some passages which were apparently written under the influence of strong devotional feeling. He loved to dwell on the power of the Christian religion to effect much that the ancient philosophers could only promise. He loved to consider that religion as a bond of charity, the curb of evil passions, the consolation of the wretched, the support of the timid, the hope of the dying. But controversies on speculative points of theology seem to have engaged scarcely any portion of his attention. In what he wrote on Church Government he showed, as far as he dared, a tolerant and charitable spirit. He troubled himself not at all about Homoousians and Homoi-ousians, Monothelites and Nestorians. He

* *De Augustinis*, Lib. 7. Cap. 3.

lived in an age in which disputes on the most subtle points of divinity excited an intense interest throughout Europe, and nowhere more than in England. He was placed in the very thick of the conflict. He was in power at the time of the Synod of Dort, and must for months have been daily deafened with talk about election, reprobation, and final perseverance. Yet we do not remember a line in his works from which it can be inferred that he was either a Calvinist or an Arminian. While the world was resounding with the noise of a disputatious philosophy and a disputatious theology, the Baconian school, like Alworthy seated between Square and Thwackum, preserved a calm neutrality half scornful, half benevolent, and, content with adding to the sum of practical good, left the war of words to those who liked it.

We have dwelt long on the end of the Baconian philosophy, because from this peculiarity all the other peculiarities of that philosophy necessarily arose. Indeed, scarcely any person who proposed to himself the same end with Bacon could fail to hit upon the same means.

The vulgar notion about Bacon we take to be this, that he invented a new method of arriving at truth, which method is called Induction, and that he detected some fallacy in the syllogistic reasoning which had been in vogue before his time. This notion is about as well founded as that of the people who, in the middle ages, imagined that Virgil was a great conjurer. Many who are far too well informed to talk such extravagant nonsense entertain what we think incorrect notions as to what Bacon really effected in this matter.

The inductive method has been practised ever since the beginning of the world by every human being. It is constantly practised by the most ignorant clown, by the most thoughtless schoolboy, by the very child at the breast. That method leads the clown to the conclusion that if he sows barley he shall not reap wheat.

By that method the schoolboy learns that a cloudy day is the best for catching trout. The very infant, we imagine, is led by induction to expect milk from his mother or nurse, and none from his father.

Not only is it not true that Bacon invented the inductive method ; but it is not true that he was the first person who correctly analyzed that method and explained its uses. Aristotle had long before pointed out the absurdity of supposing that the syllogistic reasoning could ever conduct men to the discovery of any new principle, had shown that such discoveries must be made by induction, and by induction alone, and had given the history of the inductive process, concisely indeed, but with great perspicuity and precision.

Again, we are not inclined to ascribe much practical value to that analysis of the inductive method which Bacon has given in the second book of the *Novum Organum*. It is indeed an elaborate and correct analysis. But it is an analysis of that which we are all doing from morning to night, and which we continue to do even in our dreams. A plain man finds his stomach out of order. He never heard Lord Bacon's name. But he proceeds in the strictest conformity with the rules laid down in the second book of the *Novum Organum*, and satisfies himself that minced pies have done the mischief. "I ate minced pies on Monday and Wednesday, and I was kept awake by indigestion all night." This is the *comparentia ad intellectum instantiarum convenientium*. "I did not eat any on Tuesday and Friday, and I was quite well." This is the *comparentia instantiarum in proximo quæ natura data privantur*. "I ate very sparingly of them on Sunday, and was very slightly indisposed in the evening. But on Christmas-day I almost dined on them, and was so ill that I was in great danger." This is the *comparentia instantiarum secundum magis et minus*. "It cannot have been the

brandy which I took with them. For I have drunk brandy daily for years without being the worse for it." This is the *rejectio naturarum*. Our invalid then proceeds to what is termed by Bacon the *Vindemiatio*, and pronounces that minced pies do not agree with him.

We repeat that we dispute neither the ingenuity nor the accuracy of the theory contained in the second book of the *Novum Organum*; but we think that Bacon greatly over-rated its utility. We conceive that the inductive process, like many other processes, is not likely to be better performed merely because men know how they perform it. William Tell would not have been one whit more likely to cleave the apple if he had known that his arrow would describe a parabola under the influence of the attraction of the earth. Captain Barclay would not have been more likely to walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours, if he had known the name and place of every muscle in his legs. Monsieur Jourdain probably did not pronounce D and F more correctly after he had been apprised that D is pronounced by touching the teeth with the end of the tongue, and F by putting the upper teeth on the lower lip. We cannot perceive that the study of Grammar makes the smallest difference in the speech of people who have always lived in good society. Not one Londoner in ten thousand can lay down the rules for the proper use of *will* and *shall*. Yet not one Londoner in a million ever misplaces his *will* and *shall*. Doctor Robertson could, undoubtedly, have written a luminous dissertation on the use of those words. Yet, even in his latest work, he sometimes misplaced them ludicrously. No man uses figures of speech with more propriety because he knows that one figure is called a metonymy and another a synecdoche. A drayman in a passion calls out, "You are a pretty fellow," without suspecting that he is uttering irony, and that irony is one of the four primary

tropes. The old systems of rhetoric were never regarded by the most experienced and discerning judges as of any use for the purpose of forming an orator. "Ego hanc vim intelligo," said Cicero, "esse in præceptis omnibus, non ut ea secuti oratores eloquentiæ laudem sint adepti, sed quæ sua sponte homines eloquentes facerent, ea quosdam observasse, atque id egisse; sic esse non eloquentiam ex artificio, sed artificium ex eloquentia natum." We must own that we entertain the same opinion concerning the study of Logic which Cicero entertained concerning the study of Rhetoric. A man of sense syllogizes in *celarent* and *sesare* all day long without suspecting it; and, though he may not know what an *ignoratio elenchi* is, has no difficulty in exposing it whenever he falls in with it; which is likely to be as often as he falls in with a Reverend Master of Arts nourished on mode and figure in the cloisters of Oxford. Considered merely as an intellectual feat, the *Organum* of Aristotle can scarcely be admired too highly. But the more we compare individual with individual, school with school, nation with nation, generation with generation, the more we do lean to the opinion that the knowledge of the theory of logic has no tendency whatever to make men good reasoners.

What Aristotle did for the syllogistic process Bacon has, in the second book of the *Novum Organum*, done for the inductive process; that is to say, he has analyzed it well. His rules are quite proper; but we do not need them, because they are drawn from our own constant practice.

But, though everybody is constantly performing the process described in the second book of the *Novum Organum*, some men perform it well and some perform it ill. Some are led by it to truth, and some to error. It led Franklin to discover the nature of lightning. It led thousands, who had less brains than Franklin, to believe in animal magnetism.

But this was not because Franklin went through the process described by Bacon, and the dupes of Mesmer through a different process. The *comparentiæ* and *rejectiones* of which we have given examples will be found in the most unsound inductions. We have heard that an eminent judge of the last generation was in the habit of jocosely propounding after dinner a theory, that the cause of the prevalence of Jacobinism was the practice of bearing three names. He quoted on the one side Charles James Fox, Richard Brinsley Sheridan, John Horne Tooke, John Philpot Curran, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Theobald Wolfe Tone. These were *instantiæ convenientes*. He then proceeded to cite instances *absentiæ in proximo*, William Pitt, John Scott, William Windham, Samuel Horsley, Henry Dundas, Edmund Burke. He might have gone on to instances *secundum magis et minus*. The practice of giving children three names has been for some time a growing practice, and Jacobinism has also been growing. The practice of giving children three names is more common in America than in England. In England we still have a King and a House of Lords; but the Americans are republicans. The *rejectiones* are obvious. Burke and Theobald Wolfe Tone are both Irishmen; therefore the being an Irishman is not the cause of Jacobinism. Horsley and Horne Tooke are both clergymen; therefore the being a clergyman is not the cause of Jacobinism. Fox and Windham were both educated at Oxford; therefore the being educated at Oxford is not the cause of Jacobinism, Pitt and Horne Tooke were both educated at Cambridge; therefore the being educated at Cambridge is not the cause of Jacobinism. In this way, our inductive philosopher arrives at what Bacon calls the *Vintage*, and pronounces that the having three names is the cause of Jacobinism.

Here is an induction corresponding with

Bacon's analysis and ending in a monstrous absurdity. In what then does this induction differ from the induction which leads us to the conclusion that the presence of the sun is the cause of our having more light by day than by night? The difference evidently is not in the kind of instances, but in the number of instances; that is to say, the difference is not in that part of the process for which Bacon has given precise rules, but in a circumstance for which no precise rule can possibly be given. If the learned author of the theory about Jacobinism had enlarged either of his tables a little, his system would have been destroyed. The name of Tom Paine and William Wyndham Grenville would have been sufficient to do the work.

It appears to us, then, that the difference between a sound and unsound induction does not lie in this, that the author of the sound induction goes through the process analyzed in the second book of the *Novum Organum*, and the author of the unsound induction through a different process. They both perform the same process. But one performs it foolishly or carelessly; the other performs it with patience, attention, sagacity, and judgment. Now precepts can do little towards making men patient and attentive, and still less towards making them sagacious and judicious. It is very well to tell men to be on their guard against prejudices, not to believe facts on slight evidence, not to be content with a scanty collection of facts, to put out of their minds the *idola* which Bacon has so finely described. But these rules are too general to be of much practical use. The question is, What is a prejudice? How long does the incredulity with which I hear a new theory propounded continue to be a wise and salutary incredulity? When does it become an *idolum specus*, the unreasonable pertinacity of a too skeptical mind? What is slight evidence? What col-

lection of facts is scanty? Will ten instances do, or fifty, or a hundred? In how many months would the first human beings who settled on the shores of the ocean have been justified in believing that the moon had an influence on the tides? After how many experiments would Jenner have been justified in believing that he had discovered a safeguard against the small-pox? These are questions to which it would be most desirable to have a precise answer; but unhappily they are questions to which no precise answer can be returned.

We think then that it is possible to lay down accurate rules, as Bacon has done, for the performing of that part of the inductive process which all men perform alike; but that these rules, though accurate, are not wanted, because in truth they only tell us to do what we are all doing. We think that it is impossible to lay down any precise rule for the performing of that part of the inductive process which a great experimental philosopher performs in one way, and a superstitious old woman in another.

On this subject, we think, Bacon was in an error. He certainly attributed to his rules a value which did not belong to them. He went so far as to say, that, if his method of making discoveries were adopted, little would depend on the degree of force or acuteness of any intellect; that all minds would be reduced to one level, that his philosophy resembled a compass or a rule which equalizes all hands, and enables the most unpractised person to draw a more correct circle or line than the best draughtsman can produce without such aid.* This really seems to us as extravagant as it would have been in Lindley Murray to announce that everybody who should learn his Grammar would write as good English as Dryden, or in that very able writer, the Archbishop of Dub-

* *Novum Organum* Præf., and Lib. I. Aph. 122,

lin, to promise that all the readers of his *Logic* would reason like Chillingworth, and that all the readers of his *Rhetoric* would speak like Burke. That Bacon was altogether mistaken as to this point will now hardly be disputed. His philosophy has flourished during two hundred years, and has produced none of this levelling. The interval between a man of talents and a dunce is as wide as ever; and is never more clearly discernible than when they engage in researches which require the constant use of induction.

It will be seen that we do not consider Bacon's ingenious analysis of the inductive method as a very useful performance. Bacon was not, as we have already said, the inventor of the inductive method. He was not even the person who first analyzed the inductive method correctly, though he undoubtedly analyzed it more minutely than any who preceded him. He was not the person who first showed that by the inductive method alone new truth could be discovered. But he was the person who first turned the minds of speculative men, long occupied in verbal disputes, to the discovery of new and useful truth; and, by doing so, he at once gave to the inductive method an importance and dignity which had never before belonged to it. He was not the maker of that road; he was not the discoverer of that road; he was not the person who first surveyed and mapped that road. But he was the person who first called the public attention to an inexhaustible mine of wealth, which had been utterly neglected, and which was accessible by that road alone. By doing so, he caused that road, which had previously been trodden only by peasants and higglers, to be frequented by a higher class of travellers.

That which was eminently his own in his system was the end which he proposed to himself. The end being given, the means, as it appears to us, could not well be mistaken. If

others had aimed at the same object with Bacon, we hold it to be certain that they would have employed the same method with Bacon. It would have been hard to convince Seneca that the inventing of a safety-lamp was an employment worthy of a philosopher. It would have been hard to persuade Thomas Aquinas to descend from the making of syllogisms to the making of gunpowder. But Seneca would never have doubted for a moment that it was only by means of a series of experiments that a safety lamp could be invented. Thomas Aquinas would never have thought that his *barbara* and *baralipon* would enable him to ascertain the proportion which charcoal ought to bear to saltpetre in a pound of gunpowder. Neither common sense nor Aristotle would have suffered him to fall into such an absurdity.

By stimulating men to the discovery of new truth, Bacon stimulated them to employ the inductive method, the only method, even the ancient philosophers and the schoolmen themselves being judges, by which new truth can be discovered. By stimulating men to the discovery of useful truth, he furnished them with a motive to perform the inductive process well and carefully. His predecessors had been, in his phrase not interpreters, but anticipators of nature. They had been content with the first principles at which they had arrived by the most scanty and slovenly induction. And why was this? It was, we conceive, because their philosophy proposed to itself no practical end, because it was merely an exercise of the mind. A man who wants to contrive a new machine or a new medicine has a strong motive to observe accurately and patiently, and to try experiment after experiment. But a man who merely wants a theme for disputation or declamation has no such motive. He is therefore content with premises grounded on assumption, or on the most scanty and hasty induction. Thus, we conceive, the schoolmen acted. On

their foolish premises they often argued with great ability; and as their object was "assensum subjugare, non res,"* to be victorious in controversy, not to be victorious over nature, they were consistent. For just as much logical skill could be shown in reasoning on false as on true premises. But the followers of the new philosophy, proposing to themselves the discovery of useful truth as their object, must have altogether failed of attaining the object if they had been content to build theories on superficial induction.

Bacon has remarked † that in ages when philosophy was stationary, the mechanical arts went on improving. Why was this? Evidently because the mechanic was not content with so careless a mode of induction as served the purposes of the philosopher. And why was the philosopher more easily satisfied than the mechanic? Evidently because the object of the mechanic was to mould things, whilst the object of the philosopher was only to mould words. Careful induction is not at all necessary to the making of a good syllogism. But it is indispensable to the making of a good shoe. Mechanics, therefore, have always been, as far as the range of their humble but useful callings extended, not anticipators but interpreters of nature. And when a philosophy arose, the object of which was to do on a large scale what the mechanic does on a small scale, to extend the power and to supply the wants of man, the truth of the premises, which logically is a matter altogether unimportant, became a matter of the highest importance; and the careless induction with which men of learning had previously been satisfied gave place, of necessity, to an induction far more accurate and satisfactory.

What Bacon did for inductive philosophy may, we think, be fairly stated thus. The

* *Novum Organum*, Lib. I, Aph, 29.

† *De Augmentis*, Lib. I.

objects of preceding speculators were objects which could be attained without careful induction. Those speculators, therefore, did not perform the inductive process carefully. Bacon stirred up men to pursue an object which could be attained only by induction, and by induction carefully performed; and consequently induction was more carefully performed. We do not think that the importance of what Bacon did for inductive philosophy has ever been overrated. But we think that the nature of his services is often mistaken, and was not fully understood even by himself. It was not by furnishing philosophers with rules for performing the inductive process well, but by furnishing them with a motive for performing it well, that he conferred so vast a benefit on society.

To give to the human mind a direction which it shall retain for ages is the rare prerogative of a few imperial spirits. It cannot, therefore, be uninteresting to inquire what was the moral and intellectual constitution which enabled Bacon to exercise so vast an influence on the world.

In the temper of Bacon,—we speak of Bacon the philosopher, not of Bacon the lawyer and politician,—there was a singular union of audacity and sobriety. The promises which he made to mankind might, to a superficial reader, seem to resemble the rants which a great dramatist has put into the mouth of an Oriental conqueror half-crazed by good fortune and by violent passions.

“He shall have chariots easier than air,
Which I will have invited; and thyself
That art the messenger shall ride before him,
On a horse cut out of an entire diamond,
That shall be made to go with golden wheels,
I know not how yet.”

But Bacon performed what he promised. In truth, Fletcher would not have dared to

make Arbaces promise, in his wildest fits of excitement, the tithe of what the Baconian philosophy has performed.

The true philosophical temperament may, we think, be described in four words, much hope, little faith ; a disposition to believe that anything, however extraordinary, may be done ; an indisposition to believe that anything extraordinary has been done. In these points the constitution of Bacon's mind seems to us to have been absolutely perfect. He was at once the Mammon and the Surly of his friend Ben. Sir Epicure did not indulge in visions more magnificent and gigantic. Surly did not sift evidence with keener and more sagacious incredulity.

Closely connected with this peculiarity of Bacon's temper was a striking peculiarity of his understanding. With great minuteness of observation he had an amplitude of comprehension such as has never yet been vouchsafed to any other human being. The small fine mind of Labruyère has not a more delicate tact than the large intellect of Bacon. The Essays contain abundant proofs that no nice feature of character, no peculiarity in the ordering of a house, a garden, or a court-masque, could escape the notice of one whose mind was capable of taking in the whole world of knowledge. His understanding resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed. Fold it ; and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady. Spread it ; and the armies of powerful Sultans might repose beneath its shade.

In keenness of observation he has been equalled though perhaps never surpassed. But the largeness of his mind was all his own. The glance with which he surveyed the intellectual universe resembled that which the Archangel, from the golden threshold of heaven, darted down into the new creation.

"Round he surveyed,—and well might, where he stood
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of night's extended shade,—from eastern point
 Of *Libra*, to the fleecy star which bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
 Beyond the horizon."

His knowledge differed from that of other men as a terrestrial globe differs from an Atlas which contains a different country on every leaf. The towns and roads of England, France, and Germany are better laid down in the Atlas than on the globe. But while we are looking at England we see nothing of France; and while we are looking at France we see nothing of Germany. We may go to the Atlas to learn the bearings and distances of York and Bristol, or of Dresden and Prague. But it is useless if we want to know the bearings and distances of France and Martinique, or of England and Canada. On the globe we shall not find all the market towns in our own neighborhood; but we shall learn from it the comparative extent and the relative position of all the kingdoms of the earth. "I have taken," said Bacon, in a letter written when he was only thirty-one, to his uncle Lord Burleigh, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." In any other young man, indeed in any other man, this would have been a ridiculous flight of presumption. There have been thousands of better mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, physicians, botanists, mineralogists, than Bacon. No man would go to Bacon's works to learn any particular science or art, any more than he would go to a twelve-inch globe in order to find his way from Kennington turnpike to Clapham Common. The art which Bacon taught was the art of inventing arts. The knowledge in which Bacon excelled all men was the knowledge of the mutual relations of all departments of knowledge.

The mode in which he communicated his thoughts was peculiar to him. He had no

touch of that disputatious temper which he often censured in his predecessors. He effected a vast intellectual revolution in opposition to a vast mass of prejudices ; yet he never engaged in any controversy ; nay, we cannot at present recollect, in all his philosophical works, a single passage of a controversial character. All those works might with propriety have been put into the form which he adopted in the work entitled *Cogitata et visa* : "Franciscus Baconus sic cogitavit." These are thoughts which have occurred to me : weigh them well ; and take them or leave them.

Borgia said of the famous expedition of Charles the Eighth, that the French had conquered Italy, not with steel, but with chalk ; for that the only exploit which they had found necessary for the purpose of taking military occupation of any place had been to mark the doors of the houses where they meant to quarter. Bacon often quoted this saying and loved to apply it to the victories of his own intellect.* His philosophy, he said, came as a guest, not as an enemy. She found no difficulty in gaining admittance, without a contest, into every understanding fitted by its structure and by its capacity, to receive her. In all this we think that he acted most judiciously ; first, because, as he has himself remarked, the difference between his school and other schools was a difference so fundamental that there was hardly any common ground on which a controversial battle could be fought ; and secondly, because his mind, eminently observant, preëminently discursive and capacious, was, we conceive, neither formed by nature nor disciplined by habit for dialectical combat.

Though Bacon did not arm his philosophy with the weapons of logic, he adorned her profusely with all the richest decorations of rhetoric. His eloquence, though not untainted

* *Novum Organum*, Lib. 4. Aph. 35. and elsewhere.

with the vicious taste of his age, would alone have entitled him to a high rank in literature. He had a wonderful talent for packing thought close, and rendering it portable. In wit, if by wit be meant the power of perceiving analogies between things which appear to have nothing in common, he never had an equal, not even Cowley, not even the author of *Hudibras*. Indeed, he possessed this faculty, or rather this faculty possessed him, to a morbid degree. When he abandoned himself to it without reserve, as he did in the *Sapientia Veterum*, and at the end of the second book of the *De Augmentis*, the feats which he performed were not merely admirable, but portentous, and almost shocking. On these occasions we marvel at him as clowns on a fair-day marvel at a juggler, and can hardly help thinking that the devil must be in him.

These, however, were freaks in which his ingenuity now and then wantoned, with scarcely any other object than to astonish and amuse. But it occasionally happened that, when he was engaged in grave and profound investigations, his wit obtained the mastery over all his other faculties, and led him into absurdities into which no dull man could possibly have fallen. We will give the most striking instance which at present occurs to us. In the third book of *De Augmenti* he tells us that there are some principles which are not peculiar to one science, but are common to several, That part of philosophy which concerns itself with these principles is, in his nomenclature, designated as *philosophia prima*. He then proceeds to mention some of the principles with which this *philosophia prima* is conversant. One of them is this. An infectious disease is more likely to be communicated while it is in progress than when it has reached its height. This, says he, is true in medicine. It is also true in morals; for we see that the example of very abandoned men injures public

morality less than the example of men in whom vice has not yet extinguished all good qualities. Again, he tells us that in music a discord ending in a concord is agreeable, and that the same thing may be noted in the affections. Once more he tells us, that in physics the energy with which a principle acts is often increased by the antiperistasis of its opposite ; and that it is the same in the contests of factions. If the making of ingenious and sparkling similitudes like these be indeed the *philosophia prima*, we are quite sure that the greatest philosophical work of the nineteenth century is Mr. Moore's *Lalla Rookh*. The similitudes which we have cited are very happy similitudes. But that a man like Bacon should have taken them for more, that he should have thought the discovery of such resemblances as these an important part of philosophy, has always appeared to us one of the most singular facts in the history of letters.

The truth is that his mind was wonderfully quick in perceiving analogies of all sorts. But, like several eminent men whom we could name, both living and dead, he sometimes appeared strangely deficient in the power of distinguishing rational from fanciful analogies, analogies which are arguments from analogies which are mere illustrations, analogies like that which Bishop Butler so ably pointed out, between natural and revealed religion, from analogies like that which Addison discovered, between the series of Grecian gods carved by Phidias and the series of English kings painted by Kneller. This want of discrimination has led to many strange political speculations. Sir William Temple deduced a theory of government from the properties of the pyramid. Mr. Southey's whole system of finance is grounded on the phænomena of evaporation and rain. In theology, this perverted ingenuity has made still wilder work. From the time of Irenæus and Origen down to the present day, there has

not been a single generation in which great divines have not been led into the most absurd expositions of Scripture, by mere incapacity to distinguish analogies proper, to use the scholastic phrase, from analogies metaphorical.* It is curious that Bacon has himself mentioned this very kind of delusion among the *idola specus*; and has mentioned in language which, we are inclined to think, shows that he knew himself to be subject to it. It is the vice, he tells us, of subtle minds to attach too much importance to slight distinctions; it is the vice, on the other hand, of high and discursive intellects to attach too much importance to slight resemblances; and he adds that when this last propensity is indulged to excess, it leads men to catch at shadows instead of substances.*

Yet we cannot wish that Bacon's wit had been less luxuriant. For, to say nothing of the pleasure which it affords, it was in the vast majority of cases employed for the purpose of making obscure truth plain, of making repulsive truth attractive, of fixing in the mind forever truth which might otherwise have left but a transient impression.

The poetical faculty was powerful in Bacon's mind, but not, like his wit, so powerful as occasionally to usurp the place of his reason, and to tyrannize over the whole man. No imagination was ever at once so strong and so thoroughly subjugated. It never stirred but at a signal from good sense. Yet, though disciplined to such obedience, it gave noble proofs of its vigor. In truth, much of Bacon's life was passed in a visionary world, amidst things as strange as any that are described in the Arabian Tales, or in those romances on which the curate and barber of Don Quixote's village performed so cruel an *auto-de-fe*, amidst buildings more sumptuous than the palace of

* See some interesting remarks on this subject in Bishop Berkley's *Minute Philosopher*, Dialogue IV.

† *Novum Organum*, Lib. 1, Aph. 55.

Aladdin, fountains more wonderful than the golden water of Parizade, conveyances more rapid than the hippogryph of Ruggiero, arms more formidable than the lance of Astolfo, remedies more efficacious than the balsam of Fierabras. Yet in his magnificent day-dreams there was nothing wild, nothing but what sober reason sanctioned. He knew that all the secrets feigned by poets to have been written in the books of enchanters are worthless when compared with the mighty secrets which are really written in the book of nature, and which, with time and patience, will be read there. He knew that all the wonders wrought by all the talismans in fable were trifles when compared to the wonders which might reasonably be expected from the philosophy of fruit, and that, if his words sank deep into the minds of men, they would produce effects such as superstition had never ascribed to the incantations of Merlin and Michael Scot. It was here that he loved to let his imagination loose. He loved to picture to himself the world as it would be when his philosophy should, in his own noble phrase, "have enlarged the bounds of human empire." We might refer to many instances. But we will content ourselves with the strongest, the description of the House of Solomon in the New Atlantis. By most of Bacon's contemporaries, and by some people of our time, this remarkable passage would, we doubt not, be considered as an ingenious rodomontade, a counterpart to the adventures of Sinbad or Baron Munchausen. The truth is, that there is not to be found in any human composition a passage more eminently distinguished by profound and serene wisdom. The boldness and originality of the fiction is far less wonderful than the nice discernment which carefully excluded from that long list of prodigies everything that can be pronounced

impossible, everything that can be proved to lie beyond the mighty magic of induction and of time. Already some parts, and not the least startling parts, of this glorious prophecy have been accomplished, even according to the letter; and the whole, construed according to the spirit, is daily accomplishing all around us.

One of the most remarkable circumstances in the history of Bacon's mind is the order in which its powers expanded themselves. With him the fruit came first and remained till the last; the blossoms did not appear till late. In general, the development of the fancy is to the development of the judgment what the growth of a girl is to the growth of a boy. The fancy attains at an earlier period to the perfection of its beauty, its power, and its fruitfulness; and, as it is first to ripen, it is also first to fade. It has generally lost something of its bloom and freshness before the sterner faculties have reached maturity; and it is commonly withered and barren while those faculties still retain all their energy. It rarely happens that the fancy and the judgment grow together. It happens still more rarely that the judgment grows faster than the fancy. This seems, however, to have been the case with Bacon. His boyhood and youth appear to have been singularly sedate. His gigantic scheme of philosophical reform is said by some writers to have been planned before he was fifteen, and was undoubtedly planned while he was still young. He observed as vigilantly, meditated as deeply, and judged as temperately when he gave his first work to the world as at the close of his long career. But in eloquence, in sweetness and variety of expression, and in richness of illustration, his later writings are far superior to those of his youth. In this respect the history of his mind bears some resemblance to the history of the mind of Burke. The treatise on the Sublime and Beautiful, though written on a subject which the coldest

metaphysician could hardly treat without being occasionally betrayed into florid writing, is the most unadorned of all Burke's works. It appeared when he was twenty-five or twenty-six. When, at forty, he wrote the *Thoughts on the Causes of the existing Discontents*, his reason and his judgment had reached their full maturity; but his eloquence was still in its splendid dawn. At fifty his rhetoric was quite as rich as good taste would permit; and when he died, at almost seventy, it had become ungracefully gorgeous. In his youth he wrote on the emotions produced by mountains and cascades, by the master-pieces of painting and sculpture, by the faces and necks of beautiful women, in the style of a Parliamentary report. In his old age he discussed treaties and tariffs in the most fervent and brilliant language of romance. It is strange that the *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*, and the *Letter to a Noble Lord*, should be the productions of one man. But it is far more strange that the *Essay* should have been a production of his youth, and the *Letter* of his old age.

We will give very short specimens of Bacon's two styles. In 1597, he wrote thus: "Crafty men condemn studies; simple men admire them; and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use: that is a wisdom without them, and won by observation. Read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, have a present wit; and if he read little, have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, morals grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend." It will hardly be disputed that this is a

passage to be "chewed and digested." We do not believe that Thucydides himself has anywhere compressed so much thought into so small a space.

In the additions which Bacon afterwards made to the Essays, there is nothing superior in truth or weight to what we have quoted. But his style was constantly becoming richer and softer. The following passage, first published in 1625, will show the extent of the change: Prosperity is the blessing of the old Testament; adversity is the blessing of the New, which carrieth the greater benediction and the clearer evidence of God's favor. Yet, even in the Old Testament, if you listen to David's harp you shall hear as many hearse-like airs as carols; and the pencil of the Holy Ghost hath labored more in describing the afflictions of Job than the felicities of Solomon. Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes; and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needle-works and embroideries it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a light-some ground. Judge therefore of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

It is by the Essays that Bacon is best known to the multitude. The *Novum Organum* and the *De Augmentis* are much talked of, but little read. They have produced indeed a vast effect on the opinions of mankind; but they have produced it through the operation of intermediate agents. They have moved the intellects which have moved the world. It is in the Essays alone that the mind of Bacon is brought into immediate contact with the minds of ordinary readers. There he opens an exoteric school, and talks to plain men, in lan-

guage which everybody understands, about things in which everybody is interested. He has thus enabled those who must otherwise have taken his merits on trust to judge for themselves ; and the great body of readers have, during several generations, acknowledged that the man who has treated with such consummate ability questions with which they are familiar may well be supposed to deserve all the praise bestowed on him by those who have sat in his inner school.

Without any disparagement to the admirable treatise *De Augmentis*, we must say that, in our judgment, Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of the *Novum Organum*. All the peculiarities of his extraordinary mind are found there in the highest perfection. Many of the aphorisms, but particularly those in which he gives examples of the influence of the *idola*, show a nicety of observation that has never been surpassed. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prejudices, introduced so many new opinions. Yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit. It truly conquers with chalk and not with steel. Proposition after proposition enters into the mind, is received not as an invader, but as a welcome friend, and though previously unknown, becomes at once domesticated. But what we most admire is the vast capacity of that intellect which, without effort, takes in at once all the domains of science, all the past, the present, and the future, all the errors of two thousand years, all the encouraging signs of the passing times, all the bright hopes of the coming age. Cowley, who was among the most ardent, and not among the least discerning followers of the new philosophy, has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to

Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the *Novum Organum*, that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the great Lawgiver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter waters, in which successive generations have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest, and building no abiding city; before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye, the long course of fertilizing rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distances of marts and havens, and portioning out all those wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba.

It is painful to turn back from contemplating Bacon's philosophy to contemplate his life. Yet without so turning back it is impossible fairly to estimate his powers. He left the University at an earlier age than that at which most people repair thither. While yet a boy he was plunged into the midst of diplomatic business. Thence he passed to the study of a vast technical system of law, and worked his way up through a succession of laborious offices, to the highest post in his profession. In the meantime he took an active part in every Parliament; he was an adviser of the Crown: he paid court with the greatest assiduity and address to all whose favor was likely to be of use to him; he lived much in society; he noted the slightest peculiarities of character, and the slightest changes of fashion. Scarcely any man has led a more stirring life than that which Bacon led from sixteen to sixty. Scarcely any man has been better entitled to be called a

thorough man of the world. The founding of a new philosophy, the imparting of a new direction to the minds of speculators, this was the amusement of his leisure, the work of hours occasionally stolen from the Woolsack and the Council Board. This consideration, while it increases the admiration with which we regard his intellect, increases also our regret that such an intellect should so often have been unworthily employed. He well knew the better course, and had, at one time, resolved to pursue it. "I confess," said he in a letter written when he was still young, "that I have vast contemplative ends as I have moderate civil ends." Had his civil ends continued to be moderate, he would have been, not only the Moses, but the Joshua of philosophy. He would have fulfilled a large part of his own magnificent predictions. He would have led his followers, not only to the verge, but into the heart of the promised land. He would not merely have pointed out, but would have divided the spoil. Above all, he would have left, not only a great, but a spotless name. Mankind would then have been able to esteem their illustrious benefactor. We should not then be compelled to regard his character with mingled contempt and admiration, with mingled aversion and gratitude. We should not then regret that there should be so many proofs of the narrowness and selfishness of a heart, the benevolence of which was yet large enough to take in all races and all ages. We should not then have to blush for the disingenuousness of the most devoted worshipper of speculative truth, for the servility of the boldest champion of intellectual freedom. We should not then have seen the same man at one time far in the van, at another time far in the rear of his generation. We should not then be forced to own that he who first treated legislation as a science was among the last Englishmen who used the rack, that he who first summoned philosophers to the great

work of interpreting nature, was among the last Englishmen who sold justice. And we should conclude our survey of a life placidly, honorably, beneficently passed, "in industrious observations, grounded conclusions, and profitable inventions and discoveries," * with feelings very different from those with which we now turn away from the checkered spectacle of so much glory and so much shame.

* From a Letter of Bacon to Lord Burleigh



WARREN HASTINGS.*

(*Edinburgh Review*, October, 1841.)

WE are inclined to think that we shall best meet the wishes of our readers, if, instead of minutely examining this book, we attempt to give, in a way necessarily hasty and imperfect, our own view of the life and character of Mr. Hastings. Our feeling towards him is not exactly that of the House of Commons which impeached him in 1787; neither is it that of the House of Commons which uncovered and stood up to receive him in 1813. He had great qualities and he rendered great services to the State. But to represent him as a man of stainless virtue is to make him ridiculous; and from regard for his memory, if from no other feeling, his friends would have done well to lend no countenance to such adulation. We believe that, if he were now living, he would have sufficient judgment and sufficient greatness of mind to wish to be shown as he was. He must have known that there were dark spots on his fame. He might also have felt with pride that the splendor of his fame would bear many spots. He would have wished posterity to have a likeness of him, though an unfavorable likeness, rather than a daub at once insipid and unnatural, resembling neither him nor

* *Memoirs of the Life of Warren Hastings, first Governor-General of Bengal.* Compiled from Original Papers, by the Rev. G. R. GLEIG, M. A. 3 vols, 8vo. London: 1841.

anybody else. "Paint me as I am," said Oliver Cromwell, while sitting to young Lely "If you leave out the scars and wrinkles, I will not pay you a shilling." Even in such a trifle, the great Protector showed both his good sense and his magnanimity. He did not wish all that was characteristic in his countenance to be lost, in the vain attempt to give him the regular features and smooth blooming cheeks of the curl-pated minions of James the First. He was content that his face should go forth marked with all the blemishes which had been put on it by time, by war, by sleepless nights, by anxiety, perhaps by remorse; but with valor, policy, authority, and public care written in all its princely lines. If men truly great knew their own interest, it is thus that they would wish their minds to be portrayed.

Warren Hastings sprang from an ancient and illustrious race. It has been affirmed that his pedigree can be traced back to the great Danish sea-king, whose sails were long the terror of both coasts of the British Channel, and, who, after many fierce and doubtful struggles, yielded at last to the valor and genius of Alfred. But the undoubted splendor of the line of Hastings needs no illustration from table. One branch of that line wore, in the fourteenth century, the coronet of Pembroke. From another branch sprang the renowned Chamberlain, the faithful adherent of the White Rose, whose fate has furnished so striking a theme both to poets and to historians. His family received from the Tudors the earldom of Huntingdon, which, after long dispossession, was regained in our time by a series of events scarcely paralleled in romance.

The lords of the manor of Daylesford, in Worcestershire, claimed to be considered as the heads of this distinguished family. The main stock, indeed, prospered less than some of the younger shoots. But the Daylesford

family, though not ennobled, was wealthy and highly considered, till, about two hundred years ago, it was overwhelmed by the great ruin of the civil war. The Hastings of that time was a zealous cavalier. He raised money on his lands, sent his plate to the mint at Oxford, joined the royal army, and, after spending half his property in the cause of King Charles, was glad to ransom himself by making over most of the remaining half to Speaker Lenthall. The old seat at Daylesford still remained in the family; but it could no longer be kept up; and in the following generation it was sold to a merchant of London.

Before this transfer took place, the last Hastings of Daylesford had presented his second son to the rectory of the parish in which the ancient residence of the family stood. The living was of little value; and the situation of the poor clergyman, after the sale of the estate, was deplorable. He was constantly engaged in lawsuits about his tithes with the new lord of the manor, and was at length utterly ruined. His eldest son, Howard, a well-conducted young man, obtained a place in the customs. The second son, Pynaston, an idle, worthless boy, married before he was sixteen, lost his wife in two years, and died in the West Indies, leaving to the care of his unfortunate father a little orphan destined to strange and memorable vicissitudes of fortune.

Warren, the son of Pynaston, was born on the sixth of December, 1732. His mother died a few days later, and he was left dependent on his distressed grandfather. The child was early sent to the village school, where he learned his letters on the same bench with the sons of the peasantry; nor did any thing in his garb or fare indicate that his life was to take a widely different course from that of the young rustics with whom he studied and played. But no cloud could overcast the dawn of so much genius and so much ambition. The very

ploughmen observed, and long remembered, how kindly little Warren took to his book. The daily sight of the lands which his ancestors had possessed, and which had passed into the hands of strangers, filled his young brain with wild fancies and projects. He loved to hear stories of the wealth and greatness of his progenitors, of their splendid housekeeping, their loyalty, and their valor. On one bright summer day, the boy, then just seven years old, lay on the bank of the rivulet which flows through the old domain of his house to join the Isis. There, as threescore and ten years later he told the tale, rose in his mind a scheme which, through all the turns of his eventful career, was never abandoned. He would recover the estate which had belonged to his fathers. He would be Hastings of Daylesford. This purpose, formed in infancy and poverty, grew stronger as his intellect expanded and as his fortune rose. He pursued his plan with that calm but indomitable force of will which was the most striking peculiarity of his character. When, under a tropical sun, he ruled fifty millions of Asiatics, his hopes, amidst all the cares of war, finance, and legislation, still pointed to Daylesford. And when his long public life, so singularly checkered with good and evil, with glory and obloquy, had at length closed forever, it was to Daylesford that he retired to die.

When he was eight years old, his uncle Howard determined to take charge of him, and to give him a liberal education. The boy went up to London, and was sent to a school at Newington, where he was well taught but ill fed. He always attributed the smallness of his stature to the hard and scanty fare of this seminary. At ten he was removed to Westminster school, then flourishing under the care of Dr. Nichols. Vinny Bourne, as his pupils affectionately called him, was one of the mass ters. Churchill, Colman, Lloyd, Cumberland,

Cowper, were among the students. With Cowper, Hastings formed a friendship which neither the lapse of time, nor a wide dissimilarity of opinions and pursuits, could wholly dissolve. It does not appear that they ever met after they had grown to manhood. But forty years later, when the voices of many great orators were crying for vengeance on the oppressor of India, the shy and secluded poet could image to himself Hastings the Governor-General only as the Hastings with whom he had rowed on the Thames and played in the cloister, and refused to believe that so good-tempered a fellow could have done anything very wrong. His own life had been spent in praying, musing, and rhyming among the water-lilies of the Ouse. He had preserved in no common measure the innocence of childhood. His spirit had indeed been severely tried, but not by temptations which impelled him to any gross violation of the rules of social morality. He had never been attacked by combinations of powerful and deadly enemies. He had never been compelled to make a choice between innocence and greatness, between crime and ruin. Firmly as he held in theory the doctrine of human depravity, his habits were such that he was unable to conceive how far from the path of right even kind and noble natures may be hurried by the rage of conflict and the lust of dominion.

Hastings had another associate at Westminster of whom we shall have occasion to make frequent mention, Elijah Impey. We know little about their school days. But we think, we may safely venture to guess that, whenever Hastings wished to play a trick more than usually naughty, he hired Impey with a tart or a ball to act as fag in the worse part of the prank.

Warren was distinguished among his comrades as an excellent swimmer, boatman, and scholar. At fourteen he was first in the examination for the foundation. His name in

gilded letters on the walls of the dormitory still attests his victory over many older competitors. He stayed two years longer at the school, and was looking forward to a studentship at Christ Church, when an event happened which changed the whole course of his life. Howard Hastings died, bequeathing his nephew to the care of a friend and distant relation, named Chiswick. This gentleman, though he did not absolutely refuse the charge, was desirous to rid himself of it as soon as possible. Dr. Nichols made strong remonstrances against the cruelty of interrupting the studies of a youth who seemed likely to be one of the first scholars of the age. He even offered to bear the expense of sending his favorite pupil to Oxford. But Mr. Chiswick was inflexible. He thought the years which had already been wasted on hexameters and pentameters quite sufficient. He had it in his power to obtain for the lad a writership in the service of the East India Company. Whether the young adventurer, when once shipped off, made a fortune, or died of a liver complaint, he equally ceased to be a burden to anybody. Warren was accordingly removed from Westminster school, and placed for a few months at a commercial academy, to study arithmetic and book-keeping. In January, 1750, a few days after he had completed his seventeenth year, he sailed for Bengal, and arrived at his destination in the October following.

He was immediately placed at a desk in the Secretary's office at Calcutta, and labored there during two years. Fort William was then purely a commercial settlement. In the south of India the encroaching policy of Dupleix had transformed the servants of the English Company, against their will, into diplomatists and generals. The war of the succession was raging in the Carnatic; and the tide had been suddenly turned against the French by the genius of young Robert Clive. But in Bengal the

European settlers, at peace with the natives and with each other, were wholly occupied with ledgers and bills of lading.

After two years passed in keeping accounts at Calcutta, Hastings was sent up the country to Cossimbazar, a town which lies on the Hoogley, about a mile from Moorshedabad, and which then bore to Moorshedabad a relation, if we may compare small things with great, such as the city of London bears to Westminster. Moorshedabad was the abode of the prince who, by an authority ostensibly derived from the Mogul, but really independent, ruled the three great provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar. At Moorshedabad were the court, the harem, and the public offices. Cossimbazar was a port and a place of trade, renowned for the quantity and excellence of the silks which were sold in its marts, and constantly receiving and sending forth fleets of richly laden barges. At this important point the Company had established a small factory subordinate to that at Fort William. Here, during several years, Hastings was employed in making bargains for stuffs with native brokers. While he was thus engaged, Surajah Dowlah succeeded to the Government, and declared war against the English. The defenceless settlement of Cossimbazar, lying close to the tyrant's capital, was instantly seized. Hastings was sent a prisoner to Moorshedabad, but, in consequence of the humane intervention of the servants of the Dutch Company, was treated with indulgence. Meanwhile the Nabob marched on Calcutta; the governor and the commandant fled; the town and citadel were taken, and most of the English prisoners perished in the Black Hole.

In these events originated the greatness of Warren Hastings. The fugitive governor and his companions had taken refuge on the dreary islets of Fulda, near the mouth of the Hoogley. They were naturally desirous to obtain

full information respecting the proceedings of the Nabob; and no person seemed so likely to furnish it as Hastings, who was a prisoner at large in the immediate neighborhood of the court. He thus became a diplomatic agent, and soon established a high character for ability and resolution. The treason which at a later period was fatal to Surajah Dowlah was already in progress; and Hastings was admitted to the deliberations of the conspirators. But the time for striking had not arrived. It was necessary to postpone the execution of the design; and Hastings, who was now in extreme peril, fled to Fulda.

Soon after his arrival at Fulda, the expedition from Madras, commanded by Clive, arrived in the Hoogley. Warren, young, intrepid, and excited probably by the example of the Commander of the Forces who, having like himself been a mercantile agent of the Company, had been turned by public calamities into a soldier, determined to serve in the ranks. During the early operations of the war he carried a musket. But the quick eye of Clive soon perceived that the head of the young volunteer would be more useful than his arm. When, after the battle of Plassy, Meer Jaffier was proclaimed Nabob of Bengal, Hastings was appointed to reside at the court of the new prince as agent for the Company.

He remained at Moorshedabad till the year 1761, when he became a member of Council, and was consequently forced to reside at Calcutta. This was during the interval between Clive's first and second administration, an interval which has left on the East India Company a stain not wholly effaced by many years of just and humane government. Mr. Vansittart, the Governor, was at the head of a new and anomalous empire. On one side was a band of English functionaries, daring, intelligent, eager to be rich. On the other side was a great native population, helpless, timid, ac-

customed to crouch under oppression. To keep the stronger race from preying on the weaker, was an undertaking which taxed to the utmost the talents and energy of Clive. Vansittart, with fair intentions, was a feeble and inefficient ruler. The master caste, as was natural, broke loose from all restraint : and then was seen what we believe to be the most frightful of all spectacles, the strength of civilization without its mercy. To all other despotism there is a check, imperfect indeed, and liable to gross abuse, still sufficient to preserve society from the last extreme of misery. A time comes when the evils of submission are obviously greater than those of resistance, when fear itself begets a sort of courage, when a convulsive burst of popular rage and despair warns tyrants not to presume too far on the patience of mankind. But against misgovernment such as then afflicted Bengal, it was impossible to struggle. The superior intelligence and energy of the dominant class made their power irresistible. A war of Bengalees against Englishmen was like a war of sheep against wolves, of men against dæmons. The only protection which the conquered could find was in the moderation, the clemency, and the enlarged policy of the conquerors. That protection, at a later period, they found. But at first English power came among them unaccompanied by English morality. There was an interval between the time at which they became our subjects, and the time at which they began to reflect that we were bound to discharge towards them the duties of rulers. During that interval the business of a servant of the Company was simply to wring out of the natives a hundred or two hundred thousand pounds as speedily as possible, that he might return home before his constitution had suffered from the heat, to marry a peer's daughter, to buy rotten boroughs in Cornwall, and to give balls in St. James's Square. Of the conduct of

Hastings at this time little is known ; but the little that is known, must be considered as honorable to him. He could not protect the natives ; all that he could do was to abstain from plundering and oppressing them ; and this he appears to have done. It is certain that at this time he continued poor ; and it is equally certain that by cruelty and dishonesty he might easily have become rich. It is certain that he was never charged with having borne a share in the worst abuses which then prevailed ; and it is almost equally certain that, if he had borne a share in those abuses, the able and bitter enemies who afterwards persecuted him would not have failed to discover and to proclaim his guilt. The keen, severe, and even malevolent scrutiny to which his whole life was subjected, a scrutiny unparalleled, as we believe, in the history of mankind, is in one respect advantageous to his reputation. It brought many lamentable blemishes to light ; but it entitles him to be considered pure from every blemish which has not been brought to light.

The truth is that the temptations to which so many English functionaries yielded in the time of Mr. Vansittart were not temptations addressed to the ruling passions of Warren Hastings. He was not squeamish in pecuniary transactions ; but he was neither sordid nor rapacious. He was far too enlightened a man to look on a great empire merely as a buccaneer would look on a galleon. Had his heart been much worse than it was, his understanding would have preserved him from that extremity of baseness. He was an unscrupulous, perhaps an unprincipled statesman ; but still he was a statesman, and not a freebooter.

In 1764 Hastings returned to England. He had realized only a very moderate fortune ; and that moderate fortune was soon reduced to nothing, partly by his praiseworthy liberality,

and partly by his mismanagement. Towards his relations he appeared to have acted very generously. The greater part of his savings he left in Bengal, hoping probably to obtain the high usury of India. But high usury and bad security generally go together; and Hastings lost both interest and principal.

He remained four years in England. Of his life at this time very little is known. But it has been asserted, and is highly probable, that liberal studies and the society of men of letters occupied a great part of his time. It is to be remembered to his honor that, in days when the languages of the East were regarded by other servants of the Company merely as the means of communicating with weavers and money-changers, his enlarged and accomplished mind sought in Asiatic learning for new forms of intellectual enjoyment, and for new views of government and society. Perhaps, like most persons who have paid much attention to departments of knowledge which lie out of the common track, he was inclined to overrate the value of his favorite studies. He conceived that the cultivation of Persian literature might with advantage be made a part of the liberal education of an English gentleman; and he drew up a plan with that view. It is said that the University of Oxford, in which Oriental learning had never, since the revival of letters, been wholly neglected, was to be the seat of the institution which he contemplated. An endowment was expected from the munificence of the Company; and professors thoroughly competent to interpret Hafiz and Ferdusi were to be engaged in the East. Hastings called on Johnson, with the hope, as it should seem, of interesting in this project a man who enjoyed the highest literary reputation, and who was particularly connected with Oxford. The interview appears to have left on Johnson's mind a most favorable impression of the talents and attainments of his visitor. Long after,

when Hastings was ruling the immense population of British India, the old philosopher wrote to him, and referred in the most courtly terms, though with great dignity, to their short but agreeable intercourse.

Hastings soon began again to look towards India. He had little to attach him to England; and his pecuniary embarrassments were great. He solicited his old masters the Directors for employment. They acceded to his request, with high compliments both to his ability and to his integrity, and appointed him a Member of Council at Madras. It would be unjust not to mention that, though forced to borrow money for his outfit, he did not withdraw any portion of the sum which he had appropriated to the relief of his distressed relations. In the spring of 1769 he embarked on board of the *Duke of Grafton*, and commenced a voyage distinguished by incidents which might furnish matter for a novel.

Among the passengers in the *Duke of Grafton* was a German by the name of Imhoff. He called himself a Baron; but he was in distressed circumstances, and was going out to Madras as a portrait-painter, in the hope of picking up some of the pagodas which were then lightly got and as lightly spent by the English in India. The Baron was accompanied by his wife, a native, we have somewhere read, of Archangel. This young woman, who, born under the Arctic circle, was destined to play the part of a Queen under the tropic of Cancer, had an agreeable person, a cultivated mind, and manners in the highest degree engaging. She despised her husband heartily, and, as the story which we have to tell sufficiently proves, not without reason. She was interested by the conversation and flattered by the attentions of Hastings. The situation was indeed perilous. No place is so propitious to the formation either of close friendships or of deadly enmities as an Indian. There are very few people who do not

find a voyage which lasts several months insupportably dull. Anything is welcome which may break that long monotony, a sail, a shark, albatross, a man overboard. Most passengers find some resource in eating twice as many meals as on land. But the great devices for killing the time are quarrelling and flirting. The facilities for both these exciting pursuits are great. The inmates of the ship are thrown together far more than in any country-seat or boarding-house. None can escape from the rest except by imprisoning himself in a cell in which he can hardly turn. All food, all exercise, is taken in company. Ceremony is to a great extent banished. It is every day in the power of a mischievous person to inflict innumerable annoyances. It is every day in the power of an amiable person to confer little services. It not seldom happens that serious distress and danger call forth, in genuine beauty and deformity, heroic virtues and abject vices which, in the ordinary intercourse of good society, might remain during many years unknown even to intimate associates. Under such circumstances met Warren Hastings and the Baroness Imhoff, two persons whose accomplishments would have attracted notice in any court of Europe. The gentleman had no domestic ties. The lady was tied to a husband for whom she had no regard, and who had no regard for his honor. An attachment sprang up, which was soon strengthened by events such as could hardly have occurred on land. Hastings fell ill. The Baroness nursed him with womanly tenderness, gave him his medicines with her own hand, and even set up in his cabin while he slept. Long before the Duke of Grafton reached Madras, Hastings was in love. But his love was of a most characteristic description. Like his hatred, like his ambition, like all his passions, it was strong but not impetuous. It was calm, deep, earnest, patient of delay, unconquerable by

time. Imhoff was called into council by his wife and his wife's lover. It was arranged that the Baroness should institute a suit for a divorce in the courts of Franconia, that the Baron should afford every facility to the proceeding, and that, during the years which might elapse before the sentence should be pronounced, they should continue to live together. It was also agreed that Hastings should bestow some very substantial marks of gratitude on the complaisant husband, and should, when the marriage was dissolved, make the lady his wife, and adopt the children whom she had already borne to Imhoff.

At Madras, Hastings found the trade of the Company in a very disorganized state. His own tastes would have led him rather to political than to commercial pursuits: but he knew that the favor of his employers depended chiefly on their dividends, and that their dividends depended chiefly on the investment. He, therefore, with great judgment, determined to apply his vigorous mind for a time to this department of business, which had been much neglected, since the servants of the Company had ceased to be clerks, and had become warriors and negotiators.

In a very few months he effected an important reform. The Directors notified to him their high approbation, and were so much pleased with his conduct that they determined to place him at the head of the government of Bengal. Early in 1772 he quitted Fort St. George for his new post. The Imhoffs, who were still man and wife, accompanied him, and lived at Calcutta on the same plan which they had already followed during more than two years.

When Hastings took his seat at the head of the council board, Bengal was still governed according to the system which Clive had devised, a system which was, perhaps, skilfully contrived for the purpose of facilitating and

concealing a great revolution, but which, when that revolution was complete and irrevocable, could produce nothing but inconvenience. There were two governments, the real and the ostensible. The supreme power belonged to the Company, and was in truth the most despotic power that can be conceived. The only restraint on the English masters of the country was that which their own justice and humanity imposed on them. There was no constitutional check on their will, and resistance to them was utterly hopeless.

But though thus absolute in reality, the English had not yet assumed the style of sovereignty. They held their territories as vassals of the throne of Delhi; they raised their revenues as collectors appointed by the imperial commission; the public seal was inscribed with the imperial titles; and their mint struck only the imperial coin.

There was still a nabob of Bengal, who stood to the English rulers of his country in the same relation in which Augustulus stood to Odoacer, or the last Merovingians to Charles Martel and Pepin. He lived at Moorshedabad, surrounded by princely magnificence. He was approached with outward marks of reverence, and his name was used in public instruments. But in the government of the country he had less real share than the youngest writer or cadet in the Company's service.

The English Council which represented the Company at Calcutta was constituted on a very different plan from that which has since been adopted. At present the Governor is, as to all executive measures, absolute. He can declare war, conclude peace, appoint public functionaries or remove them, in opposition to the unanimous sense of those who sit with him in council. They are, indeed, entitled to know all that is done, to discuss all that is done, to advise, to remonstrate, to send protests to England. But it is with the Governor that the

supreme power resides, and on him that the whole responsibility rests. This system, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas in spite of the strenuous opposition of Mr. Burke, we conceive to be on the whole the best that was ever devised for the government of a country where no materials can be found for a representative constitution. In the time of Hastings the Governor had only one vote in council, and, in case of an equal division a casting vote. It therefore happened not unfrequently that he was overruled in the gravest questions; and it was possible that he might be wholly excluded, for years together, from the real direction of public affairs.

The English functionaries at Fort William had as yet paid little or no attention to the internal government of Bengal. The only branch of politics about which they much busied themselves was negotiated with native princes. The police, the administration of justice, the details of the collection of revenue, were almost entirely neglected. We may remark that the phraseology of the Company's servants still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word "political" as synonymous with "diplomatic." We could name a gentleman still living, who was described by the highest authority as an invaluable public servant, eminently fit to be at the head of the internal administration of a whole presidency, but unfortunately quite ignorant of all political business.

The internal government of Bengal the English rulers delegated to a great native minister, who was stationed at Moorshedabad. All military affairs, and with the exception of what pertains to mere ceremonial, all foreign affairs, were withdrawn from his control; but the other departments of the administration were entirely confided to him. His own stipend amounted to near a hundred thousand pounds sterling a year. The personal allowance of

the nabob, amounting to more than three hundred thousand pounds a year, passed through the minister's hands and was, to a great extent, at his disposal. The collection of the revenue, the administration of justice, the maintenance of order, were left to this high functionary; and for the exercise of his immense power he was responsible to none but the British masters of the country.

A situation so important, lucrative, and splendid, was naturally an object of ambition to the ablest and most powerful natives. Clive had found it difficult to decide between conflicting pretensions. Two candidates stood out prominently from the crowd, each of them the representative of a race and of a religion.

One of these was Mahommed Reza Khan, a Mussulman of Persian extraction, able, active, religious after the fashion of his people, and highly esteemed by them. In England he might perhaps have been regarded as a corrupt and greedy politician. But, tried by the lower standard of Indian morality, he might be considered as a man of integrity and honor.

His competitor was a Hindoo Brahmin whose name has, by a terrible and melancholy event, been inseparably associated with that of Warren Hastings, the Maharajah Nuncomar. This man had played an important part in all the revolutions which, since the time of Surajah Dowlah, had taken place in Bengal. To the consideration which in that country belongs to high and pure caste, he added the weight which is derived from wealth, talents, and experience. Of his moral character it is difficult to give a notion to those who are acquainted with human nature only as it appears in our island. What the Italian is to the Englishman, what the Hindoo is to the Italian, what the Bengalee is to other Hindoos, that was Nuncomar to other Bengalees. The physical organization of the Bengalee is feeble even to effeminacy. He lives in a constant vapor

bath. His pursuits are sedentary, his limbs delicate, his movements languid. During many ages he has been trampled upon by men of bolder and more hardy breeds. Courage, independence, veracity, are qualities to which his constitution and his situation are equally unfavorable. His mind bears a singular analogy to his body. It is weak even to helplessness for purposes of manly resistance ; but its suppleness and its tact move the children of sterner climates to admiration not unmingled with contempt. All those arts which are the natural defence of the weak are more familiar to this subtle race than to the Ionian of the time of Juvenal, or to the Jew of the dark ages. What the horns are to the buffalo, what the paw is to the tiger, what the sting is to the bee, what beauty, according to the old Greek song, is to woman, deceit is to the Bengalee. Large promises, smooth excuses, elaborate tissues of circumstantial falsehood, chicanery, perjury, forgery, are the weapons, offensive and defensive, of the people of the Lower Ganges. All those millions do not furnish one sepoy to the armies of the Company. But as usurers, as money-changers, as sharp legal practitioners, no class of human beings can bear a comparison to them. With all his softness, the Bengalee is by no means placable in his enmities or prone to pity. The pertinacity with which he adheres to his purposes yields only to the immediate pressure of fear. Nor does he lack a certain kind of courage which is often wanting to his masters. To inevitable evils he is sometimes found to oppose a passive fortitude, such as the Stoics attributed to their ideal sage. An European warrior who rushes on a battery of cannon with a loud hurrah, will sometimes shriek under the surgeon's knife, and fall into an agony of despair at the sentence of death. But the Bengalee, who would see his country overrun, his house laid in ashes, his children murdered or dishonored, without

having the spirit to strike one blow, has yet been known to endure torture with the firmness of Mucius, and to mount the scaffold with the steady step and even pulse of Algernon Sidney.

In Nuncomar, the national character was strongly and with exaggeration personified. The company's servants had repeatedly detected him in the most criminal intrigues. On one occasion he brought a false charge against another Hindoo, and tried so substantiate it by producing forged documents. On another occasion it was discovered that while professing the strongest attachment to the English, he was engaged in several conspiracies against them, and in particular that he was the medium of a correspondence between the court of Delhi and the French authorities in the Carnatic. For these and similar practices he had been long detained in confinement. But his talents and influence had not only procured his liberation, but had obtained for him a certain degree of consideration even among the British rulers of his country.

Clive was extremely unwilling to place a Musulman at the head of the administration of Bengal. On the other hand, he could not bring himself to confer immense power on a man to whom every sort of villany had been repeatedly brought home. Therefore, though the nabob, over whom Nuncomar had by intrigue acquired great influence, begged that the artful Hindoo might be intrusted with the government, Clive, after some hesitation, decided honestly and wisely in favor of Mahommed Reza Khan. When Hastings became Governor, Mahommed Reza Khan had held power seven years. An infant son of Meer Jaffier was now nabob; and the guardianship of the young prince's person had been confided to the minister.

Nuncomar, stimulated at once by cupidity and malice, had been constantly attempting to hurt the reputation of his successful rival. This

was not difficult. The revenues of Bengal, under the administration established by Clive, did not yield such a surplus as had been anticipated by the Company; for, at that time, the most absurd notions were entertained in England respecting the wealth of India. Palaces of porphyry, hung with the richest brocade, heaps of pearls and diamonds, vaults from which pagodas of gold and mohurs were measured out by the bushel, filled the imagination even of men of business. Nobody seemed to be aware of what nevertheless was most undoubtedly the truth, that India was a poorer country than countries which in Europe are reckoned poor, than Ireland, for example, or than Portugal. It was confidently believed by Lords of the Treasury and members for the city that Bengal would not only defray its own charges, but would afford an increased dividend to the proprietors of India stock, and large relief to the English finances. These absurd expectations were disappointed; and the Directors, naturally enough, chose to attribute the disappointment rather to the mismanagement of Mahomed Reza Kahn than to their own ignorance of the country intrusted to their care. They were confirmed in their error by the agents of Nuncomar; for Nuncomar had agents even in Leadenhall Street. Soon after Hastings reached Calcutta, he received a letter addressed by the Court of Directors, not to the Council generally, but to himself in particular. He was directed to remove Mahommed Reza Kahn, to arrest him together with all his family and all his partisans, and to institute a strict inquiry into the whole administration of the province. It was added that the Governor would do well to avail himself of the assistance of Nuncomar in the investigation. The vices of Nuncomar were acknowledged. But even from his vices, it was said, much advantage might at such a conjuncture be derived; and, though he could

not be safely trusted, it might still be proper to encourage him by hopes of reward.

The Governor bore no good will to Nuncomar. Many years before they had known each other at Moorshedabad ; and then a quarrel had arisen between them which all the authority of their superiors could hardly compose. Widely as they differed in most points, they resembled each other in this, that both were men of unforgiving natures. To Mahommed Reza Kahn, on the other hand, Hastings had no feelings of hostility. Nevertheless he proceeded to execute the instructions of the Company with an alacrity which he never showed, except when instructions were in perfect conformity with his own views. He had wisely as we think, determined to get rid of the system of double government in Bengal. The orders of the directors furnished him with the means of effecting his purpose, and dispensed him from the necessity of discussing the matter with his Council. He took his measures with his usual vigor and dexterity. At midnight, the palace of Mahommed Reza Khan at Moorshedabad was surrounded by a battalion of sepoy. The minister was roused from his slumbers and informed that he was a prisoner. With the Musulman gravity, he bent his head and submitted himself to the will of God. He fell not alone. A chief named Schitab Roy had been intrusted with the government of Bahar. His valor and his attachment to the English had more than once been signally proved. On that memorable day on which the people of Patna saw from their wall the whole army of the Mogul scattered by the little band of Captain Knox, the voice of the British conquerors assigned the palm of gallantry to the brave Asiatic. "I never," said Knox, when he introduced Schitab Roy, covered with blood and dust, to the English functionaries assembled in the factory, "I never saw a native fight so before." Schitab Roy was involved in the ruin of Mahommed

Reza Kahn, was removed from office and was placed under arrest. The members of the Council received no intimation of these measures till the prisoners were on their road to Calcutta.

The inquiry into the conduct of the minister was postponed on different pretences. he was detained in an easy confinement during many months. In the mean time, the great revolution which Hastings had planned was carried into effect. The office of minister was abolished. The internal administration was transferred to the servants of the Company. A system, a very imperfect system, it is true, of civil and criminal justice, under English superintendence, was established. The nabob was no longer to have even an ostensible share in the government; but he was still to receive a considerable annual allowance, and to be surrounded with the state of sovereignty. As he was an infant, it was necessary to provide guardians for his person and property. His person was intrusted to a lady of his father's harem, known by the name of Munny Begum. The office of treasurer of the household was bestowed on a son of Nuncomar, named Goordas. Nuncomar's services were wanted; yet he could not safely be trusted with power; and Hastings thought it a masterstroke of policy to reward the able and unprincipled parent by promoting the inoffensive child.

The revolution completed, the double government dissolved, the Company installed in the full sovereignty of Bengal, Hastings had no motive to treat the late ministers with rigor. Their trial had been put off on various pleas till the new organization was complete. They were then brought before a committee, over which the Governor presided. Schitab Roy was speedily acquitted with honor. A formal apology was made to him for the restraint to which he had been subjected. All the Eastern marks of respect were bestowed on him. He

was clothed in a robe of state, presented with jewels and with a richly harnessed elephant, and sent back to his government at Patna. But his health had suffered from confinement ; his high spirit had been cruelly wounded ; and soon after his liberation he died of a broken heart.

The innocence of Mahommed Reza Kahn was not so clearly established. But the Governor was not disposed to deal harshly. After a long hearing, in which Nuncomar appeared as the accuser, and displayed both the art and the inveterate rancor which distinguished him, Hastings pronounced that the charge had not been made out, and ordered the fallen minister to be set at liberty.

Nuncomar had purposed to destroy the Musulman administration, and to rise on its ruin. Both his malevolence and his cupidity had been disappointed. Hastings had made him a tool, had used him for the purpose of accomplishing the transfer of the government from Moorshedabad to Calcutta, from native to European hands. The rival, the enemy, so long envied, so implacably persecuted, had been dismissed unhurt. The situation so long and ardently desired had been abolished. It was natural that the Governor should be from that time an object of the most intense hatred to the vindictive Brahmin. As yet, however, it was necessary to suppress such feelings. The time was coming when that long animosity was to end in a desperate and deadly struggle.

In the mean time, Hastings was compelled to turn his attention to foreign affairs. The object of his diplomacy was at this time simply to get money. The finances of his government were in an embarrassed state, and this embarrassment he was determined to relieve by some means, fair or foul. The principle which directed all his dealings with his neighbors is fully expressed by the old motto of one of the great predatory families of

Teviotdale, "Thou shalt want ere I want." He seems to have laid it down, as a fundamental proposition which could not be disputed, that, when he had not as many lacs of rupees as the public service required, he was to take them from anybody who had. One thing, indeed, is to be said in excuse for him. The pressure applied to him by his employers at home, was such that only the highest virtue could have withstood, such as left him no choice except to commit great wrongs, or to resign his high post, and with that post all his hopes of fortune and distinction. The Directors, it is true, never enjoined or applauded any crime. Far from it. Whoever examines their letters written at that time will find there many just and humane sentiments, many excellent precepts, in short, an admirable code of political ethics. But every exhortation is modified or nullified by a demand of money. "Govern leniently, and send more money; practice strict justice and moderation towards neighboring powers, and send more money;" this is in truth the sum of almost all the instructions that Hastings ever received from home. Now these instructions, being interpreted, mean simply, "Be the father and the oppressor of the people; be just and unjust, moderate and rapacious." The Directors dealt with India, as the church, in the good old times, dealt with a heretic. They delivered the victim over to the executioners, with an earnest request that all possible tenderness might be shown. We by no means accuse or suspect those who framed these despatches of hypocrisy. It is probable that, writing fifteen thousand miles from the place where their orders were to be carried into effect, they never perceived the gross inconsistency of which they were guilty. But the inconsistency was at once manifest to their viceroy at Calcutta, who, with an empty treasury, with an unpaid army, with his own salary often in arrear, with deficient crops,

with government tenants daily running away, was called upon to remit home another half million without fail. Hastings saw that it was absolutely necessary for him to disregard either the moral discourses or the pecuniary requisitions of his employers. Being forced to disobey them in something, he had to consider what kind of disobedience they would most readily pardon ; and he correctly judged that the safest course would be to neglect the sermons and find the rupees.

A mind so fertile as his, and so little restrained by conscientious scruples, speedily discovered several modes of relieving the financial embarrassments of the government. The allowance of the Nabob of Bengal was reduced at a stroke from three hundred and twenty thousand pounds a year to half that sum. The Company had bound itself to pay near three hundred thousand pounds a year to the Great Mogul, as a mark of homage for the provinces which he had intrusted to their care ; and they had ceded to him the districts of Corah and Allahabad. On the plea that the Mogul was not really independent, but merely a tool in the hands of others, Hastings determined to retract these concessions. He accordingly declared that the English would pay no more tribute, and sent troops to occupy Allahabad and Corah. The situation of these places was such, that there would be little advantage and great expense in retaining them. Hastings, who wanted money and not territory, determined to sell them. A purchaser was not wanting. The rich province of Oude had, in the general dissolution of the Mogul Empire, fallen to the share of the great Mussulman house by which it is still governed. About twenty years ago, this house, by the permission of the British government, assumed the royal title ; but in the time of Warren Hastings such an assumption would have been considered by the Mahommedans of India as a monstrous im-

piety. The Prince of Oude, though he held the power, did not venture to use the style of sovereignty. To the appellation of Nabob or Viceroy, he added that of Vizier of the monarchy of Hindostan, just as in the last century the Electors of Saxony and Brandenburg, though independent of the Emperor, and often in arms against him were proud to style themselves his Grand Chamberlain and Grand Marshal. Sujah Dowlah, then Nabob Vizier, was on excellent terms with the English. He had a large treasure. Allahabad and Corah were so situated that they might be of use to him and could be of none to the Company. The buyer and seller soon came to an understanding; and the provinces which had been torn from the Mogul were made over to the government of Oude for about half a million sterling.

But there was another matter still more important to be settled by the Vizier and the Governor. The fate of a brave people was to be decided. It was decided in a manner which has left a lasting stain on the fame of Hastings and of England.

The people of Central Asia had always been to the inhabitants of India what the warriors of the German forests were to the subject of the decaying monarchy of Rome. The dark, slender, and timid Hindoo shrank from a conflict with the strong muscle and resolute spirit of the fair race, which dwelt beyond the passes. There is reason to believe that, at a period anterior to the dawn of regular history, the people who spoke the rich and flexible Sanscrit came from regions lying far beyond the Hyphasis and the Hystaspes, and imposed their yoke on the children of the soil. It is certain that, during the last ten centuries, a succession of invaders descended from the west on Hindostan; nor was the course of conquest ever turned back towards the setting sun, till that memorable campaign in which the cross of Saint George was planted on the walls of Ghizni.

The Emperors of Hindostan themselves came from the other side of the Great Mountain ridge ; and it had always been their practice to recruit their army from the hardy and valiant race from which their own illustrious house sprang. Among the military adventurers who were allured to the Mogul standards from the neighborhood of Cabul and Candahar, were conspicuous several gallant bands, known by the name of Rohillas. Their services had been rewarded with large tracts of land, fiefs of the spear, if we may use an expression drawn from an analogous state of things, in that fertile plain through which the Ramgunga flows from the snowy heights of Kumaon to join the Ganges. In the general confusion which followed the death of Aurungzebe, the warlike colony became virtually independent. The Rohillas were distinguished from the other inhabitants of India by a peculiarly fair complexion. They were more honorably distinguished by courage in war, and by skill in the arts of peace. While anarchy raged from Lahore to Cape Comorin, their little territory enjoyed the blessings of repose under the guardianship of valor. Agriculture and commerce flourished among them ; nor were they negligent of rhetoric and poetry. Many persons now living have heard aged men talk with regret of the golden days when the Afghan princes ruled in the vale of Rohilcund.

Sujah Dowlah had set his heart on adding this rich district to his own principality. Right, or show of right, he had absolutely none. His claim was in no respect better founded than that of Catherine to Poland, or that of the Bonaparte family to Spain. The Rohillas held their country by exactly the same title by which he held his, and had governed their country far better than his had ever been governed. Nor were they a people whom it was perfectly safe to attack. Their land was indeed an open plain destitute of natural defences ; but their

veins were full of the high blood of Afghanistan. As soldiers, they had not the steadiness which is seldom found except in company with strict discipline ; but their impetuous valor had been proved on many fields of battle. It was said that their chiefs, when united by common peril, could bring eighty thousand men into the field. Sujah Dowlah had himself seen them fight, and wisely shrank from a conflict with them. There was in India one army, and only one, against which even those proud Caucasian tribes could not stand. It had been abundantly proved that neither tenfold odds, nor the martial ardor of the boldest Asiatic nations, could avail aught against English science and resolution. Was it possible to induce the Governor of Bengal to let out to hire the irresistible energies of the imperial people, the skill against which the ablest chiefs of Hindostan were helpless as infants, the discipline which had so often triumphed over the frantic struggles of fanaticism and despair, the unconquerable British courage which is never so sedate and stubborn as toward the close of a doubtful and murderous day?

This was what the Nabob Vizier asked, and what Hastings granted. A bargain was soon struck. Each of the negotiators had what the other wanted. Hastings was in need of funds to carry on the government of Bengal, and to send remittances to London ; and Sujah Dowlah had an ample revenue. Sujah Dowlah was bent on subjugating the Rohillas ; and Hastings had at his disposal the only force by which the Rohillas could be subjugated. It was agreed that an English army should be lent to the Nabob Vizier, and that, for the loan, he should pay four hundred thousand pounds sterling, besides defraying all the charge of the troops while employed in his service.

“ I really cannot see,” says Mr. Gleig, “ upon what grounds, either of political or moral justice, this proposition deserves to be stigmatized

as infamous." If we understand the meaning of words, it is infamous to commit a wicked action for hire, and it is wicked to engage in war without provocation. In this particular war, scarcely one aggravating circumstance was wanting. The object of the Rohilla war was this, to deprive a large population, who had never done us the least harm, of a good government, and to place them, against their will, under an execrably bad one. Nay, even this is not all. England now descended far below the level even of those petty German princes who, about the same time, sold us troops to fight the Americans. The hussar-mongers of Hesse and Anspach had at least the assurance that the expeditions on which their soldiers were to be employed would be conducted in conformity with the humane rules of civilized warfare. Was the Rohilla war likely to be so conducted? Did the Governor stipulate that it should be so conducted? He well knew what Indian warfare was. He well knew that the power which he covenanted to put into Sujah Dowlah's hands would, in all probability be atrociously abused; and he required no guarantee, no promise that it should not be so abused. He did not even reserve to himself the right of withdrawing his aid in case of abuse, however gross. We are almost ashamed to notice Major Scott's plea, that Hastings was justified in letting out English troops to slaughter the Rohillas, because the Rohillas were not of Indian race, but a colony from a distant country. What were the English themselves? Was it for them to proclaim a crusade for the expulsion of all intruders from the countries watered by the Ganges? Did it lie in their mouths to contend that a foreign settler who establishes an empire in India is a *caput lupinum*? What would they have said if any other power had, on such a ground, attacked Madras or Calcutta, without the slightest provocation? Such a defence was wanting to

make the infamy of the transaction complete. The atrocity of the crime, and the hypocrisy of the apology, are worthy of each other.

One of the three brigades of which the Bengal army consisted was sent under Colonel Champion to join Sujah Dowlah's forces. The Rohillas expostulated, entreated, offered a large ransom, but in vain. They then resolved to defend themselves to the last. A bloody battle was fought. "The enemy," says Colonel Champion, "gave proof of a good share of military knowledge; and it was impossible to describe a more obstinate firmness of resolution than they displayed." The dastardly sovereign of Oude fled from the field. The English were left unsupported; but their fire and their charge were irresistible. It was not, however, till the most distinguished chiefs had fallen, fighting bravely at the head of their troops, that the Rohilla ranks gave way. Then the Nabob Vizier and his rabble made their appearance, and hastened to plunder the camp of the valiant enemies, whom they had never dared to look in the face. The soldiers of the Company, trained in an exact discipline, kept unbroken order, while the tents were pillaged by these worthless allies. But many voices were heard to exclaim, "We have had all the fighting, and those rogues are to have all the profit."

Then the horrors of Indian war were let loose on the fair valleys and cities of Rohilcund. The whole country was in a blaze. More than a hundred thousand people fled from their homes to pestilential jungles, preferring famine, and fever, and the haunts of tigers, to the tyranny of him, to whom an English and a Christian government had, for shameful lucre, sold their substance, and their blood, and the honor of their wives and daughters. Colonel Champion remonstrated with the Nabob Vizier, and sent strong representations to Fort Willam; but the Governor had made

no conditions as to the mode in which the war was to be carried on. He had troubled himself about nothing but his forty lacs; and, though he might disapprove of Sujah Dowlah's wanton barbarity, he did not think himself entitled to interfere, except by offering advice. This delicacy excites the admiration of the biographer. "Mr. Hastings," he says, "could not himself dictate to the Nabob, nor permit the commander of the company's troops to dictate how the war was to be carried on." No, to be sure. Mr. Hastings had only to put down by main force the brave struggles of innocent men fighting for their liberty. Their military resistance crushed, his duties ended; and he had then only to fold his arms and look on, while their villages were burned, their children butchered, and their women violated. Will Mr. Gleig seriously maintain this opinion? Is any rule more plain than this, that whoever voluntarily gives to another irresistible power over human beings is bound to take order that such power shall not be barbarously abused? But we beg pardon of our readers for arguing a point so clear.

We hasten to the end of this sad and disgraceful story. The war ceased. The finest population in India was subjected to a greedy, cowardly, cruel tyrant. Commerce and agriculture languished. The rich province which had tempted the cupidity of Sujah Dowlah became the most miserable part of his miserable dominions. Yet is the injured nation not extinct. At long intervals gleams of its ancient spirit have flashed forth; and even at this day, valor, and self-respect, and a chivalrous feeling rare among Asiatics, and a bitter remembrance of the great crime of England, distinguish that noble Afghan race. To this day they are regarded as the best of all sepoys at the cold steel; and it was very recently remarked, by one who had enjoyed great opportunities of observation, that the only natives of

India, to whom the word "gentleman" can with perfect propriety be applied, are to be found among the Rohillas.

Whatever we may think of the morality of Hastings, it cannot be denied that the financial results of his policy did honor to his talents. In less than two years after he assumed the government, he had, without imposing any additional burdens on the people subject to his authority, added about four hundred and fifty thousand pounds to the annual income of the Company, besides procuring about a million in ready money. He had also relieved the finances of Bengal from military expenditure, amounting to near a quarter of a million a year, and had thrown that charge on the Nabob of Oude. There can be no doubt that this was a result which, if it had been obtained by honest means, would have entitled him to the warmest gratitude of his country, and which, by whatever means obtained, proved that he possessed great talents for administration.

In the mean time, Parliament had been engaged in long and grave discussions on Asiatic affairs. The ministry of Lord North, in the session of 1773, introduced a measure which made a considerable change in the constitution of the Indian government. This law, known by the name of the Regulating Act, provided that the presidency of Bengal should exercise a control over the other possessions of the Company; that the chief of that presidency should be styled Governor-General; that he should be assisted by four Councillors; and that a supreme court of judicature, consisting of a chief justice and three inferior judges, should be established at Calcutta. This court was made independent of the Governor-General and Council, and was intrusted with a civil and criminal jurisdiction of immense and, at the same time, of undefined extent.

The Governor-General and Councillors were named in the act, and were to hold their situa-

tions for five years. Hastings was to be the first Governor-General. One of the four new Councillors, Mr. Barwell, an experienced servant of the Company, was then in India. The other three, General Clavering, Mr. Monson, and Mr. Francis, were sent out from England.

The ablest of the new Councillors was, beyond all doubt, Philip Francis. His acknowledged compositions proved that he possessed considerable eloquence and information. Several years passed in the public offices had formed him to habits of business. His enemies have never denied that he had a fearless and manly spirit; and his friends, we are afraid, must acknowledge that his estimate of himself was extravagantly high, that his temper was irritable, that his deportment was often rude and petulant, and that his hatred was of intense bitterness and long duration.

It is scarcely possible to mention this eminent man without adverting for a moment to the question which his name at once suggests to every mind. Was he the author of the *Letters of Junius*? Our own firm belief is that he was. The evidence is, we think, such as would support a verdict in a civil, nay, in a criminal proceeding. The handwriting of Junius is the very peculiar handwriting of Francis, slightly disguised. As to the position, pursuits, and connections of Junius, the following are the most important facts which can be considered as clearly proved; first that he was acquainted with the technical forms of the secretary of state's office; secondly, that he was intimately acquainted with the business of the war office; thirdly, that he, during the year 1770, attended debates in the House of Lords, and took notes of speeches, particularly of the speeches of Lord Chatham; fourthly, that he bitterly resented the appointment of Mr. Chamier to the place of deputy secretary-at-war; fifthly, that he was bound by some strong tie to the first Lord Holland. Now, Francis passed some

years in the secretary of state's office. He was subsequently chief clerk of the war office. He repeatedly mentioned that he had himself, in 1770, heard speeches of Lord Chatham; and some of these speeches were actually printed from his notes. He resigned his clerkship at the war-office from resentment at the appointment of Mr. Chamier. It was by Lord Holland that he was first introduced into the public service. Now, here are five marks, all of which ought to be found in Junius. They are all five found in Francis. We do not believe that more than two of them can be found in any other person whatever. If this agreement does not settle the question, there is an end of all reasoning on circumstantial evidence.

The internal evidence seems to us to point the same way. The style of Francis bears a strong resemblance to that of Junius; nor are we disposed to admit, what is generally taken for granted, that the acknowledged compositions of Francis are very decidedly inferior to the anonymous letters. The argument from inferiority, at all events, is one which may be urged with at least equal force against every claimant that has ever been mentioned, with the single exception of Burke; and it would be a waste of time to prove that Burke was not Junius. And what conclusion, after all, can be drawn from mere inferiority? Every writer must produce his best work; and the interval between his best work and his second best work may be very wide indeed. Nobody will say that the best letters of Junius are more decidedly superior to the acknowledged works of Francis than three or four of Corneille's tragedies to the rest, than three or four of Ben Jonson's comedies to the rest, than the *Pilgrim's Progress* to the other works of Bunyan, than *Don Quixote* to the other works of Cervantes. Nay, it is certain that Junius, whoever he may have been, was a most un

equal writer. To go no further than the letters which bear the signature of Junius; the letter to the king, and the letters to Horne Tooke, have little in common, except the asperity; and asperity was an ingredient seldom wanting either in the writings or in the speeches of Francis.

Indeed one of the strongest reasons for believing that Francis was Junius is the moral resemblance between the two men. It is not difficult, from the letters which, under various signatures, are known to have been written by Junius and from his dealings with Woodfall and others, to form a tolerably correct notion of his character. He was clearly a man not destitute of real patriotism and magnanimity, a man whose vices were not of a sordid kind. But he must also have been a man in the highest degree arrogant and insolent, a man prone to malevolence, and prone to the error of mistaking his malevolence for public virtue. "Doest thou well to be angry?" was the question asked in old time of the Hebrew prophet. And he answered, "I do well." This was evidently the temper of Junius; and to this cause we attribute the savage cruelty which disgraces several of his letters. No man is so merciless as he who, under a strong self-delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties. It may be added that Junius, though allied with the democratic party by common enmities, was the very opposite of a democratic politician. While attacking individuals with a ferocity which perpetually violated all the laws of literary warfare, he regarded the most defective parts of old institutions with a respect amounting to pedantry, pleaded the cause of Old Sarum with fervor, and contemptuously told the capitalists of Manchester and Leeds that, if they wanted votes, they might buy land and become freeholders of Lancashire and Yorkshire. All

this, we believe, might stand, with scarcely any change, for a character of Philip Francis.

It is not strange that the great anonymous writer should have been willing at that time to leave the country which had been so powerfully stirred by his eloquence. Everything had gone against him. That party which he clearly preferred to every other, the party of George Grenville, had been scattered by the death of its chief; and Lord Suffolk had led the greater part of it over to the ministerial benches. The ferment produced by the Middlesex election had gone down. Every faction must have been alike an object of aversion to Junius. His opinions on domestic affairs separated him from the ministry; his opinions on colonial affairs from the opposition. Under such circumstances, he had thrown down his pen in misanthropical despair. His farewell letter to Woodfall bears date the nineteenth of January, 1773. In that letter, he declared that he must be an idiot to write again; that he had meant well by the cause and the public; that both were given up; that there were not ten men who would act steadily together on any question. "But it is all alike," he added, "vile and contemptible. You have never flinched that I know of; and I shall always rejoice to hear of your prosperity." These were the last words of Junius. In a year from that time, Philip Francis was on his voyage to Bengal.

With the three new Councillors came out the judges of the Supreme Court. The chief justice was Sir Elijah Impey. He was an old acquaintance of Hastings; and it is probable that the Governor-General, if he had searched through all the inns of court, could not have found an equally serviceable tool. But the members of Council were by no means in an obsequious mood. Hastings greatly disliked the new form of government, and had no very high opinion of his coadjutors. They had

heard this, and were disposed to be suspicious and punctilious. When men are in such a frame of mind, any trifle is sufficient to give occasion for dispute. The members of Council expected a salute of twenty-one guns from the batteries of Fort William. Hastings allowed them only seventeen. They landed in ill humor. The first civilities were exchanged with cold reserve. On the morrow commenced that long quarrel which, after distracting British India, was renewed in England, and in which all the most eminent statesmen and orators of the age took active part on one or the other side.

Hastings was supported by Barwell. They had not always been friends. But the arrival of the new members of Council from England naturally had the effect of uniting the old servants of the Company. Clavering, Monson, and Francis formed the majority. They instantly wrested the government out of the hands of Hastings, condemned, certainly not without justice, his late dealings with the Nabob Vizier, recalled the English agent from Oude, and sent thither a creature of their own, ordered the brigade which had conquered the unhappy Rohillas, to return to the Company's territories, and instituted a severe inquiry into the conduct of the war. Next, in spite of the Governor-General's remonstrances, they proceeded to exercise, in the most indiscreet manner, their new authority over the subordinate presidencies; threw all the affairs of Bombay into confusion; and interfered, with an incredible union of rashness and feebleness, in the intestine disputes of the Mahratta government. At the same time, they fell on the internal administration of Bengal, and attacked the whole fiscal and judicial system, a system which was undoubtedly defective, but which it was very improbable that gentlemen fresh from England would be competent to amend. The effect of their reforms was that all protection

to life and property was withdrawn, and that gangs of robbers plundered and slaughtered with impunity in the very suburbs of Calcutta. Hastings continued to live in the Government-house, and to draw the salary of Governor-General. He continued even to take the lead at the council-board in the transaction of ordinary business; for his opponents could not but feel that he knew much of which they were ignorant, and that he decided both surely and speedily, many questions which to them would have been hopelessly puzzling. But the higher powers of government and the most valuable patronage had been taken from him.

The natives soon found this out. They considered him as a fallen man; and they acted after their kind. Some of our readers may have seen, in India, a crowd of crows pecking a sick vulture to death, no bad type of what happens in that country, as often as fortune deserts one who has been great and dreaded. In an instant all the sycophants who had lately been ready to lie for him, to forge for him, to pander for him, to poison for him, hasten to purchase the favor of his victorious enemies by accusing him. An Indian government has only to let it be understood that it wishes a particular man to be ruined; and in twenty-four hours it will be furnished with grave charges, supported by depositions so full and circumstantial that any person unaccustomed to Asiatic mendacity would regard them as decisive. It is well if the signature of the destined victim is not counterfeited at the foot of some illegal compact, and if some treasonable paper is not slipped into a hiding-place in his house. Hastings was now regarded as helpless. The power to make or mar the fortune of every man in Bengal had passed, as it seemed, into the hands of the new Councillors. Immediately charges against the Governor-General began to pour in. They were eagerly welcomed by the majority, who, to do them

justice, were men of too much honor knowingly to countenance false accusations, but who were not sufficiently acquainted with the East to be aware that, in that part of the world, a very little encouragement from power will call forth, in a week, more Oateses, and Bedloes, and Dangerfields, than Westminster Hall sees in a century.

It would have been strange indeed if, at such a juncture, Nuncomar had remained quiet. That bad man was stimulated at once by malignity, by avarice, and by ambition. Now was the time to be avenged on his old enemy, to wreak a grudge of seventeen years, to establish himself in the favor of the majority of the Council, to become the greatest native in Bengal. From the time of the arrival of the new Councillors, he had paid the most marked court to them, and had in consequence been excluded, with all indignity, from the Government-house. He now put into the hands of Francis, with great ceremony, a paper, containing several charges of the most serious description. By this document Hastings was accused of putting offices up to sale, and of receiving bribes for suffering offenders to escape. In particular, it was alleged that Mahommed Reza Khan had been dismissed with impunity, in consideration of a great sum paid to the Governor-General.

Francis read the paper in Council. A violent altercation followed. Hastings complained in bitter terms of the way in which he was treated, spoke with contempt of Nuncomar and of Nuncomar's accusation, and denied the right of the Council to sit in judgment on the Governor. At the next meeting of the Board, another communication from Nuncomar was produced. He requested that he might be permitted to attend the Council, and that he might be heard in support of his assertions. Another tempestuous debate took place. The Governor-General maintained that the council-

room was not a proper place for such an investigation; that from persons who were heated by daily conflict with him he could not expect the fairness of judges; and that he could not, without betraying the dignity of his post, submit to be confronted with a such man as Nuncomar. The majority, however, resolved to go into the charges. Hastings rose, declared the sitting at an end, and left the room followed by Barwell. The other members kept their seats, voted themselves a council, put Clavering in the chair, and ordered Nuncomar to be called in. Nuncomar not only adhered to the original charges, but, after the fashion of the East, produced a large supplement. He stated that Hastings had received a great sum for appointing Rajah Goordas treasurer of the Nabob's household, and for committing the care of his Highness's person to the Munny Begum. He put in a letter purporting to bear the seal of the Munny Begum, for the purpose of establishing the truth of his story. The seal, whether forged, as Hastings affirmed, or genuine, as we are rather inclined to believe, proved nothing. Nuncomar, as everybody knows, who knows India, had only to tell the Munny Begum that such a letter would give pleasure to the majority of the Council, in order to procure her attestation. The majority, however, voted that the charge was made out; that Hastings had corruptly received between thirty and forty thousand pounds; and that he ought to be compelled to refund.

The general feeling among the English in Bengal was strongly in favor of the Governor-General. In talents for business, in knowledge of the country, in general courtesy of demeanor, he was decidedly superior to his persecutors. The servants of the Company were naturally disposed to side with the most distinguished member of their own body against a clerk from the war-office, who, profoundly ignorant of the native languages and of the native character,

took on himself to regulate every department of the administration. Hastings however, in spite of the general sympathy of his countrymen, was in a most painful situation. There was still an appeal to higher authority in England. If that authority took part with his enemies, nothing was left to him but to throw up his office. He accordingly placed his resignation in the hands of his agent at London, Colonel Mackleane. But Macleane was instructed not to produce the resignation, unless it should be fully ascertained that the feeling at the India House was adverse to the Governor-General.

The triumph of Nuncomar seemed to be complete. He held a daily levee, to which his countrymen resorted in crowds, and to which, on one occasion, the majority of the Council condescended to repair. His house was an office for the purpose of receiving charges against the Governor-General. It was said that, partly by threats, and partly by wheedling, the villainous Brahmin had induced many of the wealthiest men of the province to send in complaints. But he was playing a perilous game. It was not safe to drive to despair a man of such resources and of such determination as Hastings. Nuncomar, with all his acuteness, did not understand the nature of the institutions under which he lived. He saw that he had with him the majority of the body which made treaties, gave places, raised taxes. The separation between political and judicial functions was a thing of which he had no conception. It had probably never occurred to him that there was in Bengal an authority perfectly independent of the Council, an authority which could protect one whom the Council wished to destroy, and send to the gibbet one whom the Council wished to protect. Yet such was the fact. The Supreme Court was, within the sphere of its own duties, altogether independent of the Government. Hastings, with

his usual sagacity, had seen how much advantage he might derive from possessing himself of this stronghold; and he had acted accordingly. The Judges, especially the Chief Justice, were hostile to the majority of the Council. The time had now come for putting this formidable machinery into action.

On a sudden, Calcutta was astounded by the news that Nuncomar had been taken up on a charge of felony, committed, and thrown into the common jail. The crime imputed to him was that six years before he had forged a bond. The ostensible prosecutor was a native. But it was then, and still is, the opinion of everybody, idiots and biographers excepted, that Hastings was the real mover in the business.

The rage of the majority rose to the highest point. They protested against the proceedings of the Supreme Court, and sent several urgent messages to the Judges, demanding that Nuncomar should be admitted to bail. The Judges returned haughty and resolute answers. All that the Council could do was to heap honors and emoluments on the family of Nuncomar; and this they did. In the mean time the assizes commenced; a true bill was found; and Nuncomar was brought before Sir Elijah Impey and a jury composed of Englishmen. A great quantity of contradictory swearing, and the necessity of having every word of the evidence interpreted, protracted the trial to a most unusual length. At last a verdict of guilty was returned, and the Chief Justice pronounced sentence of death on the prisoner.

That Impey ought to have respited Nuncomar we hold to be perfectly clear. Whether the whole proceeding was not illegal, is a question. But it is certain, that whatever may have been, according to technical rules of construction, the effect of the statute under which the trial took place, it was most unjust to hang

a Hindoo for forgery. The law which made forgery capital in England was passed without the smallest reference to the state of society in India. It was unknown to the natives of India. It had never been put in execution among them, certainly not for want of delinquents. It was in the highest degree shocking to all their notions. They were not accustomed to the distinction which many circumstances, peculiar to our own state of society, have led us to make between forgery and other kinds of cheating. The counterfeiting of a seal was, in their estimation, a common act of swindling; nor had it ever crossed their minds that it was to be punished as severely as gang-robbery or assassination. A just judge would, beyond all doubt, have reserved the case for the consideration of the sovereign. But Impey would not hear of mercy or delay.

The excitement among all classes was great. Francis and Francis's few English adherents described the Governor-General and the Chief Justice as the worst of murderers. Clavering, it was said, swore that, even at the foot of the gallows, Nuncomar should be rescued. The bulk of the European society, though strongly attached to the Governor-General, could not but feel compassion for a man who, with all his crimes, had so long filled so large a space in their sight, who had been great and powerful before the British empire in India began to exist, and to whom, in the old times, governors and members of council, then mere commercial factors, had paid court for protection. The feeling of the Hindoos was infinitely stronger. They were, indeed, not a people to strike one blow for their countryman. But his sentence filled them with sorrow and dismay. Tried even by their low standard of morality, he was a bad man. But bad as he was, he was the head of their race and religion, a Brahmin of the Brahmins. He had inherited the purest and highest caste. He had prac-

tised with the greatest punctuality all those ceremonies to which the superstitious Bengalees ascribe far more importance than to the correct discharge of the social duties. They felt, therefore, as a devout Catholic in the dark ages would have felt, at seeing a prelate of the highest dignity sent to the gallows by a secular tribunal. According to their old national laws, a Brahmin could not be put to death for any crime whatever. And the crime for which Nuncomar was about to die was regarded by them in much the same light in which the selling of an unsound horse, for a sound price, is regarded by a Yorkshire jockey.

The Mussulmans alone appear to have seen with exultation the fate of the powerful Hindoo, who had attempted to rise by means of the ruin of Mahommed Reza Khan. The Mahomedan historian of those times takes delight in aggravating the charge. He assures us that in Nuncomar's house a casket was found containing counterfeits of the seals of all the richest men of the province. We have never fallen in with any other authority for this story which in itself is by no means improbable.

The day drew near ; and Nuncomar prepared himself to die with that quiet fortitude with which the Bengalee, so effeminately timid in personal conflict, often encounters calamities for which there is no remedy. The sheriff, with the humanity which is seldom wanting in an English gentleman, visited the prisoner on the eve of the execution, and assured him that no indulgence, consistent with law, should be refused to him. Nuncomar expressed his gratitude with great politeness and unaltered composure. Not a muscle of his face moved. Not a sigh broke from him. He put his finger to his forehead, and calmly said that fate would have its way, and that there was no resisting the pleasure of God. He sent his compliments to Francis, Clavering, and Monson,

and charged them to protect Rajah Goordas, who was about to become the head of the Brahmins of Bengal. The sheriff withdrew, greatly agitated by what had passed, and Nuncomar sat composedly down to write notes and examine accounts.

The next morning, before the sun was in his power, an immense concourse assembled round the place where the gallows had been set up. Grief and horror were on every face; yet to the last the multitude could hardly believe that the English really purposed to take the life of the great Brahmin. At length the mournful procession came through the crowd. Nuncomar sat up in his palanquin, and looked round him with unaltered serenity. He had just parted from those who were most nearly connected with him. Their cries and contortions had appalled the European ministers of justice, but had not produced the smallest effect on the iron stoicism of the prisoner. The only anxiety which he expressed was that men of his own priestly caste might be in attendance to take charge of his corpse. He again desired to be remembered to his friends in the Council, mounted the scaffold with firmness, and gave the signal to the executioner. The moment that the drop fell, a howl of sorrow and despair rose from the innumerable spectators. Hundreds turned away their faces from the polluting sight, fled with loud wailings towards the Hoogley, and plunged into its holy waters, as if to purify themselves from the guilt of having looked on such a crime. These feelings were not confined to Calcutta. The whole province was greatly excited; and the population of Dacca, in particular, gave strong signs of grief and dismay.

Of Impey's conduct it is impossible to speak too severely. We have already said that, in our opinion, he acted unjustly in refusing to respite Nuncomar. No rational man can doubt that he took this course in order to

gratify the Governor-General. If we had ever had any doubts on that point, they would have been dispelled by a letter which Mr. Gleig has published. Hastings, three or four years later, described Impey as the man "to whose support he was at one time indebted for the safety of his fortune, honor, and reputation." These strong words can refer only to the case of Nuncomar; and they must mean that Impey hanged Nuncomar in order to support Hastings. It is, therefore, our deliberate opinion that Impey, sitting as a judge, put a man unjustly to death in order to serve a political purpose.

But we look on the conduct of Hastings in a somewhat different light. He was struggling for fortune, honor, liberty, all that makes life valuable. He was beset by rancorous and unprincipled enemies. From his colleagues he could expect no justice. He cannot be blamed for wishing to crush his accusers. He was indeed bound to use only legitimate means for that end. But it was not strange that he should have thought any means legitimate which were pronounced legitimate by the sages of the law, by men whose peculiar duty it was to deal justly between adversaries, and whose education might be supposed to have peculiarly qualified them for the discharge of that duty. Nobody demands from a party the unbending equity of a judge. The reason that judges are appointed is, that even a good man cannot be trusted to decide a cause in which he is himself concerned. Not a day passes on which an honest prosecutor does not ask for what none but a dishonest tribunal would grant. It is too much to expect that any man, when his dearest interests are at stake, and his strongest passions excited, will, as against himself, be more just than the sworn dispensers of justice. To take an analogous case from the history of our own island; suppose that Lord Stafford, when in the Tower on

suspicion of being concerned in the Popish plot, had been apprised that Titus Oates had done something which might, by a questionable construction, be brought under the head of felony. Should we severely blame Lord Stafford, in the supposed case, for causing a prosecution to be instituted, for furnishing funds, for using all his influence to intercept the mercy of the Crown? We think not. If a judge, indeed, from favor to the Catholic lords, were to strain the law in order to hang Oates, such a judge would richly deserve impeachment. But it does not appear to us that the Catholic lord, by bringing the case before the judge for decision, would materially overstep the limits of a just self-defence.

While, therefore, we have not the least doubt that this memorable execution is to be attributed to Hastings, we doubt whether it can with justice be reckoned among his crimes. That his conduct was dictated by a profound policy is evident. He was in a minority in Council. It was possible that he might long be in a minority. He knew the native character well. He knew in what abundance accusations are certain to flow in against the most innocent inhabitant of India who is under the form of power. There was not in the whole black population of Bengal, a place-holder, a place-hunter, a government tenant, who did not think that he might better himself by sending up a deposition against the Governor-General. Under these circumstances, the persecuted statesman resolved to teach the whole crew of accusers and witnesses, that, though in a minority at the council-board, he was still to be feared. The lesson which he gave them was indeed a lesson not to be forgotten. The head of the combination which had been formed against him, the richest, the most powerful, the most artful of the Hindoos, distinguished by the favor of those who then held the government, fenced round by the superstitious rever-

ence of millions, was hanged in broad day before many thousands of people. Everything that could make the warning impressive, dignity in the sufferer, solemnity in the proceeding, was found in this case. The helpless rage and vain struggles of the Council made the triumph more signal. From that moment the conviction of every native was that it was safer to take the part of Hastings in a minority than that of Francis in a majority, and that he who was so venturous as to join in running down the Governor-General might chance, in the phrase of the Eastern poet, to find a tiger, while beating the jungle for a deer. The voices of a thousand informers were silenced in an instant. From that time, whatever difficulties Hastings might have to encounter, he was never molested by accusations from natives in India.

It is a remarkable circumstance that one of the letters of Hastings to Dr. Johnson bears date a very few hours after the death of Nuncomar. While the whole settlement was in commotion, while a mighty and ancient priesthood were weeping over the remains of their chief, the conqueror in that deadly grapple sat down, with characteristic self-possession, to write about the *Tour to the Hebrides*, Jones's *Persian Grammar*, and the history, traditions, arts, and natural productions of India.

In the mean time, intelligence of the Rohilla war, and of the first disputes between Hastings and his colleagues, had reached London. The Directors took part with the majority, and sent out a letter filled with severe reflections on the conduct of Hastings. They condemned, in strong but just terms, the iniquity of undertaking offensive wars merely for the sake of pecuniary advantage. But they utterly forgot that, if Hastings had by illicit means obtained pecuniary advantages, he had done so, not for his own benefit, but in order to meet their demands. To enjoin honesty, and to insist on

having what could not be honestly got, was then the constant practice of the Company. As Lady Macbeth says of her husband, they "would not play false, and yet would wrongly win."

The Regulating Act, by which Hastings had been appointed Governor-General for five years, empowered the Crown to remove him on an address from the Company. Lord North was desirous to procure such an address. The three members of Council who had been sent out from England were men of his own choice. General Clavering, in particular, was supported by a large parliamentary connection, such as no cabinet could be inclined to disoblige. The wish of the minister was to displace Hastings, and to put Clavering at the head of the government. In the Court of Directors parties were very nearly balanced. Eleven voted against Hastings; ten for him. The Court of Proprietors was then convened. The great sale-room presented a singular appearance. Letters had been sent by the Secretary of the Treasury, exhorting all the supporters of government who held India stock to be in attendance. Lord Sandwich marshalled the friends of the administration with his usual dexterity and alertness. Fifty peers and privy councillors, seldom seen so far eastward, were counted in the crowd. The debate lasted till midnight. The opponents of Hastings had a small superiority on the division; but a ballot was demanded; and the result was that the Governor-General triumphed by a majority of above a hundred votes over the combined efforts of the Directors and the Cabinet. The ministers were greatly exasperated by this defeat. Even Lord North lost his temper, no ordinary occurrence with him, and threatened to convoke parliament before Christmas, and to bring in a bill for depriving the Company of all political power, and for restricting it to its old business of trading in silks and teas.

Colonel Macleane, who through all his conflict had zealously supported the cause of Hastings, now thought that his employer was in imminent danger of being turned out, branded with parliamentary censure, perhaps prosecuted. The opinion of the crown lawyers had already been taken respecting some parts of the Governor-General's conduct. It seemed to be high time to think of securing an honorable retreat. Under these circumstances, Macleane thought himself justified in producing the resignation with which he had been intrusted. The instrument was not in very accurate form; but the Directors were too eager to be scrupulous. They accepted the resignation, fixed on Mr. Wheler, one of their own body, to succeed Hastings, and sent out orders that General Clavering, as senior member of Council, should exercise the functions of Governor-General till Mr. Wheler should arrive.

But while these things were passing in England, a great change had taken place in Bengal. Monson was no more. Only four members of the government were left. Clavering and Francis were on one side, Barwell and the Governor-General on the other; and the Governor-General had the casting vote. Hastings, who had been during two years destitute of all power and patronage, became at once absolute. He instantly proceeded to retaliate on his adversaries. Their measures were reversed: their creatures were displaced. A new valuation of the lands of Bengal, for the purposes of taxation, was ordered: and it was provided that the whole inquiry should be conducted by the Governor-General, and that all the letters relating to it should run in his name. He began, at the same time, to revolve vast plans of conquest and dominion, plans which he lived to see realized, though not by himself. His project was to form subsidiary alliances with the native princes, particularly with those of Oude and Berar, and thus to make Britain

the paramount power in India. While he was meditating these great designs, arrived the intelligence that he had ceased to be Governor-General, that his resignation had been accepted, that Wheeler was coming out immediately, and that, till Wheeler arrived, the chair was to be filled by Clavering.

Had Hastings still been in a minority, he would probably have retired without a struggle ; but he was now the real master of British India, and he was not disposed to quit his high place. He asserted that he had never given any instructions which could warrant the steps taken at home. What his instructions had been, he owned he had forgotten. If he had kept a copy of them he had mislaid it. But he was certain that he had repeatedly declared to the Directors that he would not resign. He could not see how the court, possessed of that declaration from himself, could receive his resignation from the doubtful hands of an agent. If the resignation were invalid, all the proceedings which were founded on that resignation were null, and Hastings was still Governor-General.

He afterwards affirmed that, though his agents had not acted in conformity with his instructions, he would nevertheless have held himself bound by their acts, if Clavering had not attempted to seize the supreme power by violence. Whether this assertion were or were not true, it cannot be doubted that the imprudence of Clavering gave Hastings an advantage. The General sent for the keys of the fort and of the treasury, took possession of the records, and held a council at which Francis attended. Hastings took the chair in another apartment, and Barwell sat with him. Each of the two parties had a plausible show of right. There was no authority entitled to their obedience within fifteen thousand miles. It seemed that there remained no way of settling the dispute except an appeal to arms, and from such an

appeal Hastings, confident of his influence over his countrymen in India, was not inclined to shrink. He directed the officers of the garrison at Fort William and of all the neighboring stations to obey no orders but his. At the same time, with admirable judgment, he offered to submit the case to the Supreme Court, and to abide by its decision. By making this proposition he risked nothing; yet it was a proposition which his opponents could hardly reject. Nobody could be treated as a criminal for obeying what the judges should solemnly pronounce to be the lawful government. The boldest man would shrink from taking arms in defence of what the judges should pronounce to be usurpation. Clavering and Francis, after some delay, unwillingly consented to abide by the award of the court. The court pronounced that the resignation was invalid, and that therefore Hastings was still Governor-General under the Regulating Act; and the defeated members of the Council, finding that the sense of the whole settlement was against them, acquiesced in the decision.

About this time arrived the news that, after a suit which had lasted several years, the Franconian courts had decreed a divorce between Imhoff and his wife. The Baron left Calcutta, carrying with him the means of buying an estate in Saxony. The lady became Mrs. Hastings. The event was celebrated by great festivities; and all the most conspicuous persons at Calcutta, without distinction of parties, were invited to the Government-house. Clavering, as the Mahommedan chronicler tells the story, was sick in mind and body, and excused himself from joining the splendid assembly. But Hastings, whom, as it should seem, success in ambition and in love had put into high good humor, would take no denial. He went himself to the General's house, and at length brought his vanquished rival in triumph to the gay circle which surrounded the

bride. The exertion was too much for a frame broken by mortification as well as by disease. Clavering died a few days later.

Wheler, who came out expecting to be Governor-General, and was forced to content himself with a seat at the council-board, generally voted with Francis. But the Governor-General, with Barwell's help and his own casting vote, was still the master. Some change took place at this time in the feeling both of the Court Directors and of the Ministers of the Crown. All designs against Hastings were dropped; and, when his original term of five years expired, he was quietly reappointed. The truth is, that the fearful dangers to which the public interests in every quarter were now exposed, made both Lord North and the Company unwilling to part with a Governor whose talents, experience, and resolution, enmity itself was compelled to acknowledge.

The crisis was indeed formidable. That great and victorious empire, on the throne of which George the Third had taken his seat eighteen years before, with brighter hopes than had attended the accession of any of the long line of English sovereigns, had, by the most senseless misgovernment, been brought to the verge of ruin. In America millions of Englishmen were at war with the country from which their blood, their language, their religion, and their institutions were derived, and to which, but a short time before, they had been as strongly attached as the inhabitants of Norfolk and Leicestershire. The great powers of Europe, humbled to the dust by the vigor and genius which had guided the counsels of George the Second, now rejoiced in the prospect of a signal revenge. The time was approaching when our island, while struggling to keep down the United States of America, and pressed with a still nearer danger by the too just discontents of Ireland, was to be assailed by France, Spain, and Holland, and to be threatened by

the armed neutrality of the Baltic; when even our maritime supremacy was to be in jeopardy, when hostile fleets were to command the Straits of Calpe and the Mexican Sea; when the British flag was to be scarcely able to protect the British Channel. Great as were the faults of Hastings, it was happy for our country that at that conjuncture, the most terrible through which she has ever passed, he was the ruler of her Indian dominions.

An attack by sea on Bengal was little to be apprehended. The danger was that the European enemies of England might form an alliance with some native power, might furnish that power with troops, arms, and ammunition, and might thus assail our possessions on the side of the land. It was chiefly from the Mahrattas that Hastings anticipated danger. The original seat of that singular people was the wild range of hills which runs along the western coast of India. In the reign of Aurungzebe the inhabitants of those regions, led by the great Sevajee, began to descend on the possessions of their wealthier and less warlike neighbors. The energy, ferocity, and cunning of the Mahrattas, soon made them the most conspicuous among the new powers which were generated by the corruption of the decaying monarchy. At first they were only robbers. They soon rose to the dignity of conquerors. Half the provinces of the empire were turned into Mahratta principalities. Freebooters, sprung from low castes, and accustomed to menial employments, became mighty Rajahs. The Bonslas, at the head of a band of plunderers, occupied the vast region of Berar. The Guicowar, which is, being interpreted, the Herdsman, founded that dynasty which still reigns in Guzerat. The houses of Scindia and Holkar waxed great in Malwa. One adventurous captain made his nest on the impregnable rock of Gooti. Another became the

lord of the thousand villages which are scattered among the green rice-fields of Tanjore.

That was the time, throughout India, of double government. The form and the power were everywhere separated. The Mussulman nabobs who had become sovereign princes, the Vizier in Oude, and the Nizam at Hyderabad, still called themselves the viceroys of the house of Tamerlane. In the same manner the Mahratta states, though really independent of each other, pretended to be members of one empire. They all acknowledged, by words and ceremonies, the supremacy of the heir of Sevajee, a *roi fainéant* who chewed bang and toyed with dancing girls in a state prison at Sattara, and of his Peshwa or mayor of the palace, a great hereditary magistrate, who kept a court with kingly state at Poonah, and whose authority was obeyed in the spacious provinces of Aurungabad and Bejapoor.

Some months before war was declared in Europe the government of Bengal was alarmed by the news that a French adventurer, who passed for a man of quality, had arrived at Poonah. It was said that he had been received there with great distinction, that he had delivered to the Peshwa letters and presents from Louis the Sixteenth, and that a treaty, hostile to England, had been concluded between France and the Mahrattas.

Hastings immediately resolved to strike the first blow. The title of the Peshwa was not undisputed. A portion of the Mahratta nation was favorable to a pretender. The Governor-General determined to espouse this pretender's interest, to move an army across the peninsula of India, and to form a close alliance with the chief of the House of Bonsla, who ruled Berar, and who, in power and dignity, was inferior to none of the Mahratta princes.

The army had marched, and the negotiations with Berar were in progress, when a letter from the English consul at Cairo, brought the news

that war had been proclaimed both in London and Paris. All the measures which the crisis required were adopted by Hastings without a moment's delay. The French factories in Bengal were seized. Orders were sent to Madras that Pondicherry should instantly be occupied. Near Calcutta, works were thrown up which thought to render the approach of a hostile force impossible. A maritime establishment was formed for the defence of the river. Nine new battalions of sepoy were raised, and a corps of native artillery was formed out of the hardy Lascars of the Bay of Bengal. Having made these arrangements, the Governor-General with calm confidence pronounced his presidency secure from all attack, unless the Mahrattas should march against it in conjunction with the French.

The expedition which Hastings had sent westward was not so speedily or completely successful as most of his undertakings. The commanding officer procrastinated. The authorities at Bombay blundered. But the Governor-General persevered. A new commander repaired the errors of his predecessor. Several brilliant actions spread the military renown of the English through regions where no European flag had ever been seen. It is probable that, if a new and more formidable danger had not compelled Hastings to change his whole policy, his plans respecting the Mahratta empire would have been carried into complete effect.

The authorities in England had wisely sent out to Bengal, as commander of the forces and member of the Council, one of the most distinguished soldiers of that time. Sir Eyre Coote had, many years before, been conspicuous among the founders of the British empire in the East. At the council of war which preceded the battle of Plassey, he earnestly recommended, in opposition to the majority, that daring course which, after some hesitation, was adopted, and which was crowned with such

splendid success. He subsequently commanded in the south of India against the brave and unfortunate Lally, gained the decisive battle of Wandewash over the French and their native allies, took Pondicherry, and made the English power supreme in the Carnatic. Since those great exploits near twenty years had elapsed. Coote had no longer the bodily activity which he had shown in earlier days; nor was the vigor of his mind altogether unimpaired. He was capricious and fretful, and required much coaxing to keep him in good humor. It must, we fear, be added that the love of money had grown upon him, and that he thought more about his allowances, and less about his duties, than might have been expected from so eminent a member of so noble a profession. Still he was perhaps the ablest officer that was then to be found in the British army. Among the native soldiers his name was great and his influence unrivalled. Nor is he yet forgotten by them. Now and then a white-bearded old sepoy may still be found, who loves to talk of Porto Novo and Pollilore. It is but a short time since one of those aged men came to present a memorial to an English officer, who holds one of the highest employments in India. A print of Coote hung in the room. The veteran recognized at once that face and figure which he had not seen for more than half a century, and forgetting his salam to the living, halted, drew himself up, lifted his hand, and with solemn reverence paid his military obeisance to the dead.

Coote, though he did not, like Barwell, vote constantly with the Governor-General, was by no means inclined to join in systematic opposition, and on most questions concurred with Hastings, who did his best, by assiduous courtship, and by readily granting the most exorbitant allowances, to gratify the strongest passions of the old soldier.

It seemed likely at this time that a general

reconciliation would put an end to the quarrels which had, during some years, weakened and disgraced the government of Bengal. The dangers of the empire might well induce men of patriotic feeling,—and of patriotic feeling neither Hastings nor Francis was destitute,—to forget private enmities, and to co-operate heartily for the general good. Coote had never been concerned in faction. Wheler was thoroughly tired of it. Barwell had made an ample fortune, and, though he had promised that he would not leave Calcutta while his help was needed in Council, was most desirous to return to England, and exerted himself to promote an arrangement which would set him at liberty.

A compact was made, by which Francis agreed to desist from opposition, and Hastings engaged that the friends of Francis should be admitted to a fair share of the honors and emoluments of the service. During a few months after this treaty there was apparent harmony at the council-board.

Harmony, indeed, was never more necessary; for at this moment internal calamities, more formidable than war itself, menaced Bengal. The authors of the Regulating Act of 1773 had established two independent powers, the one judicial, the other political; and, with a carelessness scandalously common in English legislation, had omitted to define the limits of either. The judges took advantage of the indistinctness, and attempted to draw to themselves supreme authority, not only within Calcutta, but through the whole of the great territory subject to the Presidency of Fort William. There are few Englishmen who will not admit that the English law, in spite of modern improvements, is neither so cheap nor so speedy as might be wished. Still, it is a system which has grown up among us. In some points it has been fashioned to suit our feelings; in others, it has gradually fashioned our feelings

to suit itself. Even to its worst evils we are accustomed; and therefore, though, we may complain of them, they do not strike us with the horror and dismay which would be produced by a new grievance of smaller severity. In India the case is widely different. English law, transplanted to that country, has all the vices from which we suffer here; it has them all in a far higher degree; and it has other vices, compared with which the worst vices from which we suffer are trifles. Dilatory here, it is far more dilatory in a land where the help of an interpreter is needed by every judge and by every advocate. Costly here, it is far more costly in a land into which the legal practitioners must be imported from an immense distance. All English labor in India, from the labor of the Governor-general and the Commander-in-Chief, down to that of a groom or a watchmaker, must be paid for at a higher rate than at home. No man will be banished, and banished to the torrid zone, for nothing. The rule holds good with respect to the legal profession. No English barrister will work, fifteen thousand miles from all his friends, with the thermometer at ninety-six in the shade, for the emoluments which will content him in chambers that overlook the Thames. Accordingly, the fees at Calcutta are about three times as great as the fees of Westminster Hall; and this, though the people of India are, beyond all comparison, poorer than the people of England. Yet the delay and the expense, grievous as they are, form the smallest part of the evil which English law, imported without modifications into India, could not fail to produce. The strongest feelings of our nature, honor, religion, female modesty, rose up against the innovation. Arrest on mesne process was the first step in most civil proceedings; and to a native of rank arrest was not merely a restraint, but a foul personal indignity. Oaths were required in every stage of every suit; and the

feelings of a Quaker about an oath is hardly stronger than that of a respectable native. That the apartments of a woman of quality should be entered by strange men, or that her face should be seen by them, are, in the East, intolerable outrages, outrages which are more dreaded than death, and which can be expiated only by the shedding of blood. To these outrages the most distinguished families of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa, were now exposed. Imagine what the state of our own country would be, if a jurisprudence were on a sudden introduced among us, which should be to us what our jurisprudence was to our Asiatic subjects. Imagine what the state of our country would be, if it were enacted that any man, by merely swearing that a debt was due to him, should acquire a right to insult the persons of men of the most honorable and sacred callings and of women of the most shrinking delicacy, to horsewhip a general officer, to put a bishop in the stocks, to treat ladies in the way which called forth the blow of Wat Tyler. Something like this was the effect of the attempt which the Supreme Court made to extend its jurisdiction over the whole of the Company's territory.

A reign of terror began, of terror heightened by mystery ; for even that which was endured was less horrible than that which was anticipated. No man knew what was next to be expected from this strange tribunal. It came from beyond the black water, as the people of India, with mysterious horror, call the sea. It consisted of judges not one of whom was familiar with the usages of the millions over whom they claimed boundless authority. Its records were kept in unknown characters ; its sentences were pronounced in unknown sounds. It had already collected round itself an army of the worst part of the native population, informers, and false witnesses, and common barrators, and agents of chicane, and above

all, a banditti of bailiffs' followers, compared with whom the retainers of the worst English spunging-houses, in the worst times, might be considered as upright and tender-hearted. Many natives, highly considered among their countrymen, were seized, hurried up to Calcutta, flung into the common jail, not for any crime even imputed, not for any debt that had been proved, but merely as a precaution till their cause should come to trial. There were instances in which men of the most venerable dignity, persecuted without a cause by extortioners, died of rage and shame in the gripe of the vile alguazils of Impey. The harems of noble Mahommedans, sanctuaries respected in the East by governments which respected nothing else, were burst open by gangs of bailiffs. The Mussulmans, braver and less accustomed to submission than the Hindoos sometimes stood on their defence; and there were instances in which they shed their blood in the doorway, while defending, sword in hand, the sacred apartments of their women. Nay, it seemed as if even the faint-hearted Bengalee, who had crouched at the feet of Surajah Dowlah, who had been mute during the administration of Vansittart, would at length find courage in despair. No Mahratta invasion had ever spread through the province such dismay as this inroad of English lawyers. All the injustice of former oppressors, Asiatic and European, appeared as a blessing when compared with the Justice of the Supreme Court.

Every class of the population, English and native, with the exception of the ravenous pettifoggers who fattened on the misery and terror of an immense community, cried out loudly against this fearful oppression. But the judges were immovable. If a bailiff was resisted, they ordered the soldiers to be called out. If a servant of the Company, in conformity with the orders of the government, withstood the miserable catchpoles who, with

Impey's writs in their hands, exceeded the insolence and rapacity of gang-robbers, he was flung into prison for a contempt. The lapse of sixty years, the virtue and wisdom of many eminent magistrates who have during that time administered justice in the Supreme Court, have not effaced from the minds of the people of Bengal the recollection of those evil days.

The members of the government were, on this subject, united as one man. Hastings had courted the judges; he had found them useful instruments; but he was not disposed to make them his own masters, or the masters of India. His mind was large; his knowledge of the native character most accurate. He saw that the system pursued by the Supreme Court was degrading to the government and ruinous to the people; and he resolved to oppose it manfully. The consequence was, that the friendship, if that be the proper word for such a connection, which had existed between him and Impey, was for a time completely dissolved. The government placed itself firmly between the tyrannical tribunal and the people. The Chief Justice proceeded to the wildest excesses. The Governor-General and all the members of Council were served with writs, calling on them to appear before the King's justices, and to answer for their public acts. This was too much. Hastings, with just scorn, refused to obey the call, set at liberty the persons wrongfully detained by the Court, and took measures for resisting the outrageous proceedings of the sheriffs' officers, if necessary, by the sword. But he had in view another device, which might prevent the necessity of an appeal to arms. He was seldom at a loss for an expedient; and he knew Impey well. The expedient, in this case, was a very simple one, neither more nor less than a bribe. Impey was, by act of parliament, a judge, independent of the government of Bengal, and entitled to a salary of eight thousand a year. Hastings pro-

posed to make him also a judge in the company's service, removable at the pleasure of the government of Bengal; and to give him, in that capacity, about eight thousand a year more. It was understood that, in consideration of this new salary, Impey would desist from urging the high pretensions of his court. If he did urge these pretensions, the government could, at a moment's notice, eject him from the new place which had been created for him. The bargain was struck; Bengal was saved; an appeal to force averted; and the Chief Justice was rich, quiet, and infamous.

Of Impey's conduct it is unnecessary to speak. It was of a piece with almost every part of his conduct that comes under the notice of history. No other such judge has dishonored the English ermine, since Jefferies drank himself to death in the Tower. But we cannot agree with those who have blamed Hastings for this transaction. The case stood thus. The negligent manner in which the Regulating Act had been framed put it in the power of the Chief Justice to throw a great country into the most dreadful confusion. He was determined to use his power to the utmost, unless he was paid to be still; and Hastings consented to pay him. The necessity was to be deplored. It is also to be deplored that pirates should be able to exact ransom, by threatening to make their captives walk a plank. But to ransom a captive from pirates has always been held a humane and Christian act; and it would be absurd to charge the payer of the ransom with corrupting the virtue of the corsair. This we seriously think, is a not unfair illustration of the relative position of Impey, Hastings, and the people of India. Whether it was right in Impey to demand or to accept a price for powers which, if they really belonged to him, he could not abdicate, which, if they did not belong to him, he ought never to have usurped, and which in neither case he could honestly sell, is

one question. It is quite another question, whether Hastings was not right to give any sum, however large, to any man, however worthless, rather than either surrender millions of human beings to pillage, or rescue them by civil war.

Francis strongly opposed this arrangement. It may, indeed, be suspected that personal aversion to Impey was as strong a motive with Francis as regard for the welfare of the province. To a mind burning with resentment, it might seem better to leave Bengal to the oppressors than to redeem it by enriching them. It is not improbable, on the other hand, that Hastings may have been the more willing to resort to an expedient agreeable to the Chief Justice, because that high functionary had already been so serviceable, and might, when existing dissensions were composed, be serviceable again.

But it was not on this point alone that Francis was now opposed to Hastings. The peace between them proved to be only a short and hollow truce, during which their mutual aversion was constantly becoming stronger. At length an explosion took place. Hastings publicly charged Francis with having deceived him, and with having induced Barwell to quit the service by insincere promises. Then came a dispute, such as frequently arises even between honorable men, when they may make important agreements by mere verbal communication. An impartial historian will probably be of opinion that they had misunderstood each other; but their minds were so much embittered that they imputed to each other nothing less than deliberate villany. "I do not," said Hastings, in a minute recorded on the Consultations of the Government, "I do not trust to Mr. Francis's promises of candor, convinced that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public conduct by his private, which I have found to be void of truth and honor." After the Council had risen, Francis put a challenge

into the Governor-General's hand. It was instantly accepted. They met and fired. Francis was shot through the body. He was carried to a neighboring house, where it appeared that the wound, though severe, was not mortal. Hastings inquired repeatedly after his enemy's health, and proposed to call on him; but Francis coldly declined the visit. He had a proper sense, he said, of the Governor-General's politeness, but could not consent to any private interview. They could meet only at the council-board.

In a very short time it was made signally manifest to how great a danger the Governor-General had, on this occasion, exposed his country. A crisis arrived with which he, and he alone, was competent to deal. It is not too much to say that, if he had been taken from the head of affairs, the years 1780 and 1781 would have been as fatal to our power in Asia as to our power in America.

The Mahrattas had been the chief objects of apprehension to Hastings. The measures which he had adopted for the purpose of breaking their power, had at first been frustrated by the errors of those whom he was compelled to employ; but his perseverance and ability seemed likely to be crowned with success, when a far more formidable danger showed itself in another quarter.

About thirty years before this time, a Mahomedan soldier had begun to distinguish himself in the wars of Southern India. His education had been neglected; his extraction was humble. His father had been a petty officer of revenue; his grandfather a wandering dervise. But though thus meanly descended, though ignorant even of the alphabet, the adventurer had no sooner been placed at the head of a body of troops than he approved himself a man born for conquest and command. Among the crowd of chiefs who were struggling for a share of India, none could compare with him

in the qualities of the captain and the statesman. He became a general; he became a sovereign. Out of the fragments of old principalities, which had gone to pieces in the general wreck, he formed for himself a great, compact, and vigorous empire. That empire he ruled with the ability, severity, and vigilance of Lewis the Eleventh. Licentious in his pleasures, implacable in his revenge, he had yet enlargement of mind enough to perceive how much the prosperity of subjects adds to the strength of governments. He was an oppressor; but he had at least the merit of protecting his people against all oppression except his own. He was now in extreme old age; but his intellect was as clear, and his spirit as high, as in the prime of manhood. Such was the great Hyder Ali, the founder of the Mahomedan kingdom of Mysore, and the most formidable enemy with whom the English conquerors of India have ever had to contend.

Had Hastings been governor of Madras, Hyder would have been either made a friend, or vigorously encountered as an enemy. Unhappily the English authorities in the South provoked their powerful neighbor's hostility, without being prepared to repel it. On a sudden, an army of ninety thousand men, far superior in discipline and efficiency to any other native force that could be found in India, came pouring through those wild passes which, worn by mountain torrents, and dark with jungle, lead down from the table land of Mysore to the plains of the Carnatic. This great army was accompanied by a hundred pieces of cannon; and its movements were guided by many French officers, trained in the best military schools of Europe.

Hyder was everywhere triumphant. The sepoy in many British garrisons flung down their arms. Some forts were surrendered by treachery, and some by despair. In a few days the whole open country north of the Coleroon

had submitted. The English inhabitants of Madras could already see by night, from the top of Mount St. Thomas, the eastern sky reddened by a vast semicircle of blazing villages. The white villas, to which our countrymen retire after the daily labors of government and of trade, when the cool evening breeze springs up from the bay, were now left without inhabitants; for bands of the fierce horsemen of Mysore had already been seen prowling among the tulip-trees, and near the gay verandas. Even the town was not thought secure, and the British merchants and public functionaries made haste to crowd themselves behind the cannon of Fort St. George.

There were the means, indeed, of assembling an army which might have defended the presidency, and even driven the invader back to his mountains. Sir Hector Munro was at the head of one considerable force; Baillie was advancing with another. United, they might have presented a formidable front even to such an enemy as Hyder. But the English commanders, neglecting those fundamental rules of the military art of which the propriety is obvious even to men who had never received a military education, deferred their junction, and were separately attacked. Baillie's detachment was destroyed. Munro was forced to abandon his baggage, to fling his guns into the tanks, and to save himself by a retreat which might be called a flight. In three weeks from the commencement of the war, the British empire in Southern India had been brought to the verge of ruin. Only a few fortified places remained to us. The glory of our arms had departed. It was known that a great French expedition might soon be expected on the coast of Coromandel. England, beset by enemies on every side, was in no condition to protect such remote dependencies.

Then it was that the fertile genius and serene courage of Hastings achieved their most signal

triumph. A swift ship, flying before the south-west monsoon, brought the evil tidings in a few days to Calcutta. In twenty-four hours the Governor-General had framed a complete plan of policy adapted to the altered state of affairs. The struggle with Hyder was a struggle for life and death. All minor objects must be sacrificed to the preservation of the Carnatic. The disputes with the Mahrattas must be accommodated. A large military force and a supply of money must be instantly sent to Madras. But even these measures would be insufficient, unless the war, hitherto so grossly mismanaged, were placed under the direction of a vigorous mind. It was no time for trifling. Hastings determined to resort to an extreme exercise of power, to suspend the incapable governor of Fort St. George, to send Sir Eyre Coote to oppose Hyder, and to intrust that distinguished general with the whole administration of the war.

In spite of the sullen opposition of Francis, who had now recovered from his wound, and had returned to the Council, the Governor-General's wise and firm policy was approved by the majority of the board. The reinforcements were sent off with great expedition, and reached Madras before the French armament arrived in the Indian seas. Coote, broken by age and disease, was no longer the Coote of Wandewash; but he was still a resolute and skilful commander. The progress of Hyder was arrested; and in a few months the great victory of Porto Novo retrieved the honor of the English arms.

In the mean time Francis had returned to England, and Hastings was now left perfectly unfettered. Wheeler had gradually been relaxing in his opposition, and, after the departure of his vehement and implacable colleague, co-operated heartily with the Governor-General, whose influence over the British in India, always great, had, by the vigor and success of

his recent measures, been considerably increased.

But, though the difficulties arising from factions within the Council were at an end, another class of difficulties had become more pressing than ever. The financial embarrassment was extreme. Hastings had to find the means, not only of carrying on the government of Bengal, but of maintaining a most costly war against both Indian and European enemies in the Carnatic, and of making remittances to England. A few years before this time he had obtained relief by plundering the Mogul and enslaving the Rohillas; nor were the resources of his fruitful mind by any means exhausted.

His first design was on Benares, a city which in wealth, population, dignity, and sanctity was among the foremost in Asia. It was commonly believed that half a million of human beings was crowded into that labyrinth of lofty alleys rich with shrines, and minarets, and balconies, and carved oriels, to which the sacred apes clung by hundreds. The traveller could scarcely make his way through the press of holy mendicants and not less holy bulls. The broad and stately flights of steps which descended from these swarming haunts to the bathing-places along the Ganges were worn every day by the footsteps of an innumerable multitude of worshippers. The schools and temples drew crowds of pious Hindoos from every province where the Brahminical faith was known. Hundreds of devotees came thither every month to die; for it was believed that a peculiarly happy fate awaited the man who should pass from the sacred city into the sacred river. Nor was superstition the only motive which allured strangers to that great metropolis. Commerce had as many pilgrims as religion. All along the shores of the venerable stream lay great fleets of vessels laden with rich merchandise. From the looms of Benares went forth the most delicate silks that adorned the balls

of St. James's and of Versailles; and in the bazars, the muslins of Bengal and the sabres of Oude were mingled with the jewels of Golconda and the shawls of Cashmere. This rich capital, and surrounding tract, had long been under the immediate rule of a Hindoo prince, who rendered homage to the Mogul emperors. During the great anarchy of India, the lords of Benares became independent of the court of Delhi, but were compelled to submit to the authority of the Nabob of Oude. Oppressed by this formidable neighbor, they invoked the protection of the English. The English protection was given; and at length the Nabob Vizier, by a solemn treaty, ceded all his rights over Benares to the Company. From that time the Rajah was the vassal of the government of Bengal, acknowledged its supremacy, and engaged to send an annual tribute to Fort William. This tribute Cheyte Sing, the reigning prince, had paid with strict punctuality.

About the precise nature of the legal relation between the Company and the Rajah of Benares, there has been much warm and acute controversy. On the one side it has been maintained that Cheyte Sing was merely a great subject on whom the superior power had a right to call for aid in the necessities of the empire. On the other side, it has been contended that he was an independent prince, that the only claim which the Company had upon him was for a fixed tribute, and that, while the fixed tribute was regularly paid, as it assuredly was, the English had no more right to exact any further contribution from him than to demand subsidies from Holland or Denmark. Nothing is easier than to find precedents and analogies in favor of either view.

Our own impression is that neither view is correct. It was too much the habit of English politicians to take it for granted that there was in India a known and definite constitution

by which questions of this kind were to be decided. The truth is that, during the interval which elapsed between the fall of the house of Tamerlane and the establishment of the British ascendancy there was no such constitution. The old order of things had passed away; the new order of things was not yet formed. All was transition confusion, obscurity. Everybody kept his as head he best might, and scrambled for whatever he could get. There have been similar seasons in Europe. The time of the dissolution of the Carovingian empire is an instance. Who would think of seriously discussing the question, what extent of pecuniary aid and of obedience Hugh Capet had a constitutional right to demand from the Duke of Brittany or the Duke of Normandy? The words "constitutional right" had, in that state of society, no meaning. If Hugh Capet laid hands on all the possessions of the Duke of Normandy, this might be unjust and immoral; but it would not be illegal, in the sense in which the ordinances of Charles the Tenth were illegal. If, on the other hand, the Duke of Normandy made war on Hugh Capet, this might be unjust and immoral; but it would not be illegal, in the sense in which the expedition of Prince Louis Bonaparte was illegal.

Very similar to this was the state of India sixty years ago. Of the existing governments not a single one could lay claim to legitimacy, or could plead any other title than recent occupation. There was scarcely a province in which the real sovereignty and the nominal sovereignty were not disjoined. Titles and forms were still retained which implied that the heir of Tamerlane was an absolute ruler, and that the Nabobs of the provinces were his lieutenants. In reality he was a captive. The Nabobs were in some places independent princes. In other places, as in Bengal and the Carnatic, they had, like their master, become mere phantoms, and the Company was

supreme. Among the Mahrattas, again, the heir of Sevajee still kept the title of Rajah; but he was a prisoner, and his prime minister, the Peshwa, had become the hereditary chief of the state. The Peshwa, in his turn, was fast sinking into the same degraded situation into which he had reduced the Rajah. It was, we believe, impossible to find, from the Himalayas to Mysore, a single government which was at once a government *de facto*, and a government *de jure*, which possessed the physical means of making itself feared by its neighbors and subjects, and which had at the same time the authority derived from law and long prescription.

Hastings clearly discerned what was hidden from most of his contemporaries, that such a state of things gave immense advantages to a ruler of great talents and few scruples. In every international question that could arise he had his option between the *de facto* grounds and the *de jure* grounds; and the probability was that one of those grounds would sustain any claim that it might be convenient for him to make, and enable him to resist any claim made by others. In every controversy, accordingly, he resorted to the plea which suited his immediate purpose, without troubling himself in the least about consistency: and thus he scarcely ever failed to find what, to persons of short memories and scanty information, seemed to be a justification for what he wanted to do. Sometimes the Nabob of Bengal is a shadow, sometimes a monarch. Sometimes the Vizier is a mere deputy, sometimes an independent potentate. If it is expedient for the Company to show some legal title to the revenues of Bengal, the grant under the seal of the Mogul is brought forward as an instrument of the highest authority. When the Mogul asks for the rents which were reserved to him by that very grant, he is told that he is a mere pageant, that the English power rests on a very different foundation.

from a charter given by him, that he is welcome to play at royalty as long as he likes, but that he must expect no tribute from the real masters of India.

It is true that it was in the power of others, as well as of Hastings, to practise this legerdemain ; but in the controversies of governments, sophistry is of little use unless it be backed by power. There is a principle which Hastings was fond of asserting in the strongest terms, and on which he acted with undeviating steadiness. It is a principle which, we must own, though it may be grossly abused, can hardly be disputed in the present state of public law. It is this, that where an ambiguous question arises between two governments, there is, if they cannot agree, no appeal except by force, and that the opinion of the stronger must prevail. Almost every question was ambiguous in India. The English government was the strongest in India. The consequences are obvious. The English Government might do exactly what it chose.

The English government now chose to wring money out of Cheyte Sing. It had formerly been convenient to treat him as a sovereign prince ; it was now convenient to treat him as a subject. Dexterity inferior to that of Hastings could easily find, in the general chaos of laws and customs, arguments for either course. Hastings wanted a great supply. It was known that Cheyte Sing had a large revenue, and it was suspected that he had accumulated a treasure. Nor was he a favorite at Calcutta. He had, when the Governor-General was in great difficulties, courted the favor of Francis and Clavering. Hastings, who, less perhaps from evil passions than from policy, seldom left an injury unpunished, was not sorry that the fate of Cheyte Sing should teach neighboring princes the same lesson which the fate of Nuncomar had already impressed on the inhabitants of Bengal.

In 1778, on the first breaking out of the war with France, Cheyte Sing was called upon to pay, in addition to his fixed tribute, an extraordinary contribution of fifty thousand pounds. In 1779, an equal sum was exacted. In 1780, the demand was renewed. Cheyte Sing, in the hope of obtaining some indulgence, secretly offered the Governor-General a bribe of twenty thousand pounds. Hastings took the money, and his enemies have maintained that he took it intending to keep it. He certainly concealed the transaction, for a time, both from the Council in Bengal and from the Directors at home; nor did he ever give any satisfactory reason for the concealment. Public spirit, or the fear of detection, at last determined him to withstand the temptation. He paid over the bribe to the Company's treasury, and insisted that the Rajah should instantly comply with the demands of the English government. The Rajah, after the fashion of his countrymen, shuffled, solicited, and pleaded poverty. The grasp of Hastings was not to be so eluded. He added to the requisition another ten thousand pounds as a fine for delay, and sent troops to exact the money.

The money was paid. But this was not enough. The late events in the south of India had increased the financial embarrassments of the Company. Hastings was determined to plunder Cheyte Sing, and, for that end, to fasten a quarrel on him. Accordingly, the Rajah was now required to keep a body of cavalry for the service of the British government. He objected and evaded. This was exactly what the Governor-General wanted. He had now a pretext for treating the wealthiest of his vassals as a criminal. "I resolved,"—these are the words of Hastings himself,—“to draw from his guilt the means of relief of the Company's distresses, to make him pay largely for his pardon, or to exact a severe vengeance for past delinquency.” The plan

was simply this, to demand larger and larger contributions till the Rajah should be driven to remonstrate, then to call his remonstrance a crime, and to punish him by confiscating all his possessions.

Cheyte Sing was in the greatest dismay. He offered two hundred thousand pounds to propitiate the British government. But Hastings replied that nothing less than half a million would be accepted. Nay, he began to think of selling Benares to Oude, as he had formerly sold Allahabad and Rohilcund. The matter was one which could not be well managed at a distance; and Hastings resolved to visit Benares.

Cheyte Sing received his liege lord with every mark of reverence, came near sixty miles, with his guards, to meet and escort the illustrious visitor, and expressed his deep concern at the displeasure of the English. He even took off his turban, and laid it in the lap of Hastings, a gesture which in India marks the most profound submission and devotion. Hastings behaved with cold and repulsive severity. Having arrived at Benares, he sent to the Rajah a paper containing the demands of the government of Bengal. The Rajah, in reply, attempted to clear himself from the accusations brought against him. Hastings, who wanted money and not excuses, was not to be put off by the ordinary artifices of Eastern negotiation. He instantly ordered the Rajah to be arrested and placed under the custody of two companies of sepoys.

In taking these strong measures, Hastings scarcely showed his usual judgment. It is possible that, having had little opportunity of personally observing any part of the population of India, except the Bengalees, he was not fully aware of the difference between their character and that of the tribes which inhabit the upper provinces. He was now in a land far more favorable to the vigor of the human

frame than the Delta of the Ganges ; in a land fruitful of soldiers, who have been found worthy to follow English battalions to the charge and into the breach. The Rajah was popular among his subjects. His administration had been mild ; and the prosperity of the district which he governed presented a striking contrast to the depressed state of Bahar under our rule, and a still more striking contrast to the misery of the provinces which were cursed by the tyranny of the Nabob Vizier. The national and religious prejudices with which the English were regarded throughout India were peculiarly intense in the metropolis of the Brahminical superstition. It can therefore scarcely be doubted that the Governor-General, before he outraged the dignity of Cheyte Sing by an arrest, ought to have assembled a force capable of bearing down all opposition. This had not been done. The handful of Sepoys who attended Hastings would probably have been sufficient to overawe Moorshedabad, or the Black Town of Calcutta. But they were unequal to a conflict with the hardy rabble of Benares. The streets surrounding the palace were filled by an immense multitude, of whom a large proportion, as is usual in Upper India, wore arms. The tumult became a fight, and the fight a massacre. The English officers defended themselves with desperate courage against overwhelming numbers, and fell, as became them, sword in hand. The sepoys were butchered. The gates were forced. The captive prince, neglected by his jailers during the confusion, discovered an outlet which opened on the precipitous bank of the Ganges, let himself down to the water by a string made of the turbans of his attendants, found a boat, and escaped to the opposite shore.

If Hastings had, by indiscreet violence brought himself into a difficult and perilous situation, it is only just to acknowledge that

he extricated himself with even more than his usual ability and presence of mind. He had only fifty men with him. The building in which he had taken up his residence was on every side blockaded by the insurgents. But his fortitude remained unshaken. The Rajah from the other side of the river sent apologies and liberal offers. They were not even answered. Some subtle and enterprising men were found who undertook to pass through the throng of enemies, and to convey the intelligence of the late events to the English cantonments. It is the fashion of the natives of India to wear large ear-rings of gold. When they travel, the rings are laid aside, lest the precious metal should tempt some gang of robbers; and, in place of the ring, a quill or a roll of paper is inserted in the orifice to prevent it from closing. Hastings placed in the ears of his messengers letters rolled up in the smallest compass. Some of these letters were addressed to the commanders of English troops. One was written to assure his wife of his safety. One was to the envoy whom he had sent to negotiate with the Mahrattas. Instructions for the negotiation were needed; and the Governor-General framed them in that situation of extreme danger with as much composure as if he had been writing in his palace at Calcutta.

Things, however, were not yet at the worst. An English officer of more spirit than judgment, eager to distinguish himself, made a premature attack on the insurgents beyond the river. His troops were entangled in narrow streets, and assailed by a furious population. He fell, with many of his men; and the survivors were forced to retire.

This event produced the effect which has never failed to follow every check, however slight, sustained in India by the English arms. For hundreds of miles round, the whole country was in commotion. The entire population of

the district of Benares took arms. The fields were abandoned by the husbandmen, who thronged to defend their prince. The infection spread to Oude. The oppressed people of that province rose up against the Nabob Vizier, refused to pay their imposts, and put the revenue officers to flight. Even Bahar was ripe for revolt. The hopes of Cheyte Sing began to rise. Instead of imploring mercy in the humble style of a vassal, he began to talk the language of a conqueror, and threatened, it was said, to sweep the white usurpers out of the land. But the English troops were now assembling fast. The officers, and even the private men, regarded the Governor-General with enthusiastic attachment, and flew to his aid with an alacrity which, as he boasted, had never been shown on any other occasion. Major Popham, a brave and skilful soldier, who had highly distinguished himself in the Mahratta war, and in whom the Governor-General reposed the greatest confidence, took the command. The tumultuary army of the Rajah was put to rout. His fastnesses were stormed. In a few hours, above thirty thousand men left his standard, and returned to their ordinary avocations. The unhappy prince fled from his country forever. His fair domain was added to the British dominions. One of his relations indeed was appointed rajah; but the Rajah of Benares was henceforth to be, like the Nabob of Bengal, a mere pensioner.

By this revolution, an addition of two hundred thousand pounds a year was made to the revenues of the Company. But the immediate relief was not as great as had been expected. The treasure laid up by Cheyte Sing had been popularly estimated at a million sterling. It turned out to be about a fourth part of that sum; and, such as it was, it was seized by the army, and divided as prize-money.

Disappointed in his expectations from Bena-

res, Hastings was more violent than he would otherwise have been, in his dealings with Oude. Sujah Dowlah, had long been dead. His son and successor, Asaph-ul-Dowlah, was one of the weakest and most vicious even of Eastern princes. His life was divided between torpid repose and the most odious forms of sensuality. In his court there was boundless waste, throughout his dominions wretchedness and disorder. He had been, under the skilful management of the English government, gradually sinking from the rank of an independent prince to that of a vassal of the Company. It was only by the help of a British brigade that he could be secure from the aggressions of neighbors who despised his weakness, and from the vengeance of subjects who detested his tyranny. A brigade was furnished; and he engaged to defray the charge of paying and maintaining it. From that time his independence was at an end. Hastings was not a man to lose the advantage which he had thus gained. The Nabob soon began to complain of the burden which he had undertaken to bear. His revenues, he said, were falling off; his servants were unpaid; he could no longer support the expense of the arrangement which he had sanctioned. Hastings would not listen to these representations. The Vizier, he said, had invited the government of Bengal to send him troops, and had promised to pay for them. The troops had been sent. How long the troops were to remain in Oude was a matter not settled by the treaty. It remained, therefore, to be settled between the contracting parties. But the contracting parties differed. Who then must decide? The stronger.

Hastings also argued that, if the English force was withdrawn, Oude would certainly become a prey to anarchy, and would probably be overrun by a Mahratta army. That the finances of Oude were embarrassed he admitted. But he contended, not without reason, that the

embarrassment was to be attributed to the incapacity and vices of Asaph-ul-Dowlah himself, and that, if less was spent on the troops, the only effect would be that more would be squandered on worthless favorites.

Hastings had intended, after settling the affairs of Benares, to visit Lucknow, and there to confer with Asaph-ul-Dowlah. But the obsequious courtesy of the Nabob Vizier prevented this visit. With a small train he hastened to meet the Governor-General. An interview took place in the fortress, which, from the crest of the precipitous rock of Chunar, looks down on the waters of the Ganges.

At first sight it might appear impossible that the negotiation should come to an amicable close. Hastings wanted an extraordinary supply of money. Asaph-ul Dowlah wanted to obtain a remission of what he already owed. Such a difference seemed to admit of no compromise. There was, however, one course satisfactory to both sides, one course by which it was possible to relieve the finances both of Oude and Bengal; and that course was adopted. It was simply this, that the Governor-General and the Nabob Vizier should join to rob a third party; and the third party whom they determined to rob was the parent of one of the robbers.

The mother of the late Nabob, and his wife, who was the mother of the present Nabob, were known as the Begums or Princesses of Oude. They had possessed great influence over Sujah Dowlah, and had, at his death, been left in possession of a splendid dotation. The domains of which they received the rents and administered the government were of wide extent. The treasure hoarded by the late Nabob, a treasure which was popularly estimated at near three millions sterling, was in their hands. They continued to occupy his favorite palace at Fyzabad, the Beautiful Dwelling; while Asaph-ul-Dowlah held his court in the stately

Lucknow, which he had built for himself on the shores of the Goomti, and had adorned with noble mosques and colleges.

Asaph-ul-Dowlah had already extorted considerable sums from his mother. She had at length appealed to the English; and the English had interfered. A solemn compact had been made, by which she consented to give her son some pecuniary assistance, and he in his turn, promised never to commit any further invasion of her rights. This compact was formally guaranteed by the government of Bengal. But times had changed; money was wanted; and the power which had given the guarantee was not ashamed to instigate the spoiler to excesses such that even he shrank from them.

It was necessary to find some pretext for a confiscation inconsistent, not merely with plighted faith, not merely with the ordinary rules of humanity and justice, but also with that great law of filial piety which, even in the wildest tribes of savages, even in those more degraded communities which whether under the influence of a corrupt half-civilization, retains a certain authority over the human mind. A pretext was the last thing that Hastings was likely to want. The insurrection at Benares had produced disturbances in Oude. These disturbances it was convenient to impute to the Princesses. Evidence for the imputation there was scarcely any; unless reports wandering from one mouth to another, and gaining something by every transmission, may be called evidence. The accused were furnished with no charge; they were permitted to make no defence; for the Governor-General wisely considered that, if he tried them, he might not be able to find a ground for plundering them. It was agreed between him and the Nabob Vizier that the noble ladies should, by a sweeping act of confiscation, be stripped of their domains and treasures for the benefit of the Company, and that the sums thus obtained

should be accepted by the government of Bengal in satisfaction of its claims on the government of Oude.

While Asaph-ul-Dowlah was at Chunar, he was completely subjugated by the clear and commanding intellect of the English statesman. But, when they had separated, the Vizier began to reflect with uneasiness on the engagements into which he had entered. His mother and grandmother protested and implored. His heart, deeply corrupted by absolute power and licentious pleasures, yet not naturally unfeeling, failed him in this crisis. Even the English resident at Lucknow, though hitherto devoted to Hastings, shrank from extreme measures. But the Governor-General was inexorable. He wrote to the resident, in terms of the greatest severity, and declared that, if the spoliation which had been agreed upon were not instantly carried into effect, he would himself go to Lucknow, and do that from which feebler minds recoil with dismay. The resident, thus menaced, waited on his Highness, and insisted that the treaty of Chunar should be carried into full and immediate effect. Asaph-ul-Dowlah yielded, making at the same time a solemn protestation that he yielded to compulsion. The lands were resumed; but the treasure was not so easily obtained. It was necessary to use violence. A body of the Company's troops marched to Fyzabad, and forced the gates of the palace. The Princesses were confined to their own apartments. But still they refused to submit. Some more stringent mode of coercion was to be found. A mode was found of which, even at this distance of time, we cannot speak without shame and sorrow.

There were at Fyzabad too ancient men, belonging to that unhappy class which a practice, of immemorial antiquity in the East, has excluded from the pleasures of love and from the hope of posterity. It has always been

held in Asiatic courts that beings thus estranged from sympathy with their kind are those whom princes may most safely trust. Sujah Dowlah had been of that opinion. He had given his entire confidence to the two eunuchs ; and after his death they remained at the head of the household of his widow.

These men were, by the orders of the British government, seized, imprisoned, ironed, starved almost to death, in order to extort money from the Princesses. After they had been two months in confinement, their health gave way. They implored permission to take a little exercise in the garden of their prison. The officer who was in charge of them stated that, if they were allowed this indulgence, there was not the smallest chance of their escaping, and that their irons really added nothing to the security of the custody in which they were kept. He did not understand the plan of his superiors. Their object in these inflictions was not security but torture ; and all mitigation was refused. Yet this was not the worst. It was resolved by an English government that these two infirm old men should be delivered to the tormentors. For that purpose they were removed to Lucknow. What horrors their dungeon there witnessed can only be guessed. But there remains on the records of Parliament, this letter, written by a British resident to a British soldier.

“Sir, the Nabob having determined to inflict corporal punishment upon the prisoners under your guard, this is to desire that his officers, when they shall come, may have free access to the prisoners, and be permitted to do with them as they shall see proper.”

While these barbarities were perpetrated at Lucknow, the Princesses were still under duress at Fyzabad. Food was allowed to enter their apartments only in such scanty quantities that their female attendants were in danger of perishing with hunger. Month after month this

cruelty continued, till at length, after twelve hundred thousand pounds had been wrung out of the Princesses, Hastings began to think that he had really got to the bottom of their coffers, and that no rigor could extort more. Then at length the wretched men who were detained at Lucknow regained their liberty. Their irons were knocked off, and the doors of their prison opened, their quivering lips, the tears which ran down their cheeks, and the thanksgivings which they poured forth to the common Father of Mussulmans and Christians, melted even the stout hearts of the English warriors who stood by.

But we must not forget to do justice to Sir Elijah Impey's conduct on this occasion. It was not indeed easy for him to intrude himself into a business so entirely alien from all his official duties. But there was something inexpressibly alluring, we must suppose, in the peculiar rankness of the infamy which was then to be got at Lucknow. He hurried thither as fast as relays of palanquin-bearers could carry him. A crowd of people came before him with affidavits against the Begums, ready drawn in their hands. Those affidavits he did not read. Some of them, indeed, he could not read; for they were in the dialects of Northern India, and no interpreter was employed. He administered the oath to the deponents with all possible expedition, and asked not a single question, not even whether they had perused the statements to which they swore. This work performed, he got again into his palanquin, and posted back to Calcutta, to be in time for the opening of term. The cause was one which, by his own confession, lay altogether out of his jurisdiction. Under the charter of justice, he had no more right to inquire into crimes committed by Asiatics in Oude, than the Lord President of the Court of Sessions of Scotland to hold an assize at Exeter. He had no right to try the Begums, nor did he pretend

to try them. With what object, then, did he undertake so long a journey? Evidently in order that he might give, in an irregular manner, that sanction which in a regular manner he could not give, to the crimes of those who had recently hired him; and in order that a confused mass of testimony which he did not sift, which he did not even read, might acquire an authority not properly belonging to it, from the signature of the highest judicial functionary in India.

The time was approaching, however, when he was to be stripped of that robe which has never, since the Revolution, been disgraced so foully as by him. The state of India had for some time occupied much of the attention of the British Parliament. Towards the close of the American war, two committees of the Commons sat on Eastern affairs. In one Edmund Burke took the lead. The other was under the presidency of the able and versatile Henry Dundas, then Lord Advocate of Scotland. Great as are the changes which during the last sixty years have taken place in our Asiatic dominions, the reports which those committees laid on the table of the House will still be found most interesting and instructive.

There was as yet no connection between the Company and either of the great parties in the state. The ministers had no motive to defend Indian abuses. On the contrary, it was for their interest to show, if possible, that the government and patronage of our Oriental empire might, with, advantage, be transferred to themselves. The votes therefore, which, in consequence of the reports made by the two committees, were passed by the Commons, breathed the spirit of stern and indignant justice. The severest epithets were applied to several of the measures of Hastings, especially to the Rohilla war; and it was resolved, on the motion of Mr. Dundas, that the Company ought to recall a Governor-General who had brought such cal-

amities on the Indian people, and such dishonor on the British name. An act was passed for limiting the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. The bargain which Hastings had made with the Chief Justice was condemned in the strongest terms ; and an address was presented to the king, praying that Impey might be summoned home to answer for his misdeeds.

Impey was recalled by a letter from the Secretary of State. But the proprietors of India Stock resolutely refused to dismiss Hastings from their service, and passed a resolution, affirming, what was undeniably true, that they were intrusted by law with the right of naming and removing their Governor-General, and that they were not bound to obey the directions of a single branch of the legislature with respect to such nomination or removal.

Thus supported by his employers, Hastings remained at the head of the government of Bengal till the spring of 1785. His administration, so eventful and stormy, closed in almost perfect quiet. In the Council there was no regular opposition to his measures. Peace was restored to India. The Mahratta war had ceased. Hyder was no more. A treaty had been concluded with his son, Tippoo ; and the Carnatic had been evacuated by the armies of Mysore. Since the termination of the American war, England had no European enemy or rival in the Eastern seas.

On a general review of the long administration of Hastings, it is impossible to deny that, against the great crimes by which it is blemished, we have to set off great public services. England had passed through a perilous crisis. She still, indeed, maintained her place in the foremost rank of European powers ; and the manner in which she had defended herself against fearful odds had inspired surrounding nations with a high opinion both of her spirit and of her strength. Nevertheless, in every part of the world, except one, she had been a

loser. Not only had she been compelled to acknowledge the independence of thirteen colonies peopled by her children, and to conciliate the Irish by giving up the right of legislating for them; but, in the Mediterranean, in the Gulf of Mexico, on the coast of Africa, on the continent of America, she had been compelled to cede the fruits of her victories in former wars. Spain regained Minorca and Florida; France regained Senegal, Goree, and several West Indian Islands. The only quarter of the world, in which Britain had lost nothing was the quarter in which her interests had been committed to the care of Hastings. In spite of the utmost exertions both of European and Asiatic enemies, the power of our country in the East had been greatly augmented. Benares was subjected; the Nabob Vizier reduced to vassalage. That our influence had been thus extended, nay, that Fort William and Fort St. George had not been occupied by hostile armies, was owing, if we may trust the general voice of the English in India, to the skill and resolution of Hastings.

His internal administration, with all its blemishes, gives him a title to be considered as one of the most remarkable men in our history. He dissolved the double government. He transferred the direction of affairs to English hands. Out of a frightful anarchy, he deduced at least a rude and imperfect order. The whole organization by which justice was dispensed, revenue collected, peace maintained throughout a territory not inferior in population to the dominions of Louis the Sixteenth or of the Emperor Joseph, was formed and superintended by him. He boasted that every public office, without exception, which existed when he left Bengal, was his creation. It is quite true that this system, after all the improvements suggested by the experience of sixty years, still needs improvement, and that it was at first far more defective than it now is. But

whoever seriously considers what it is to construct from the beginning the whole of a machine so vast and complex as a government, will allow that what Hastings effected deserves high admiration. To compare the most celebrated European ministers to him seems to us as unjust as it would be to compare the best baker in London with Robinson Crusoe, who, before he could bake a single loaf, had to make his plough and his harrow, his fences and his scarecrows, his sickle and his flail, his mill and his oven.

The just fame of Hastings rises still higher, when we reflect that he was not bred a statesman; that he was sent from school to a counting house; and that he was employed during the prime of his manhood as a commercial agent, far from all intellectual society.

Nor must we forget that all, or almost all, to whom, when placed at the head of affairs, he could apply for assistance, were persons who owed as little as himself, or less than himself, to education. A minister in Europe finds himself, on the first day on which he commences his functions, surrounded by experienced public servants, the depositories of official traditions. Hastings had no such help. His own reflection, his own energy, were to supply the place of all Downing Street and Somerset House. Having had no facilities for learning, he was forced to teach. He had first to form himself, and then to form his instruments; and this not in a single department, but in all the departments of the administration.

It must be added that, while engaged in this most arduous task, he was constantly trammelled by orders from home, and frequently borne down by majority in council. The preservation of an Empire from a formidable combination of foreign enemies, the construction of a government in all its parts, were accomplished by him, while every ship brought out bales of censure from his employers, and while

the records of every consultation were filed with acrimonious minutes by his colleagues. We believe that there never was a public man whose temper was so severely tried; not Marlborough, when thwarted by the Dutch Deputies; not Wellington, when he had to deal at once with the Portuguese Regency, the Spanish Juntas, and Mr. Percival. But the temper of Hastings was equal to almost any trial. It was not sweet; but it was calm. Quick and vigorous as his intellect was, the patience with which he endured the most cruel vexations, till a remedy could be found, resembled the patience of stupidity. He seems to have been capable of resentment, bitter and long-enduring; yet his resentment so seldom hurried him into any blunder, that it may be doubted whether what appeared to be revenge was anything but policy.

The effect of this singular equanimity was that he always had the full command of all the resources of one of the most fertile minds that ever existed. Accordingly no complication of perils and embarrassments could perplex him. For every difficulty he had a contrivance ready; and, whatever may be thought of the justice and humanity of some of his contrivances, it is certain that they seldom failed to serve the purpose for which they were designed.

Together with this extraordinary talent for devising expedients, Hastings possessed, in a very high degree, another talent scarcely less necessary to a man in his situation; we mean the talent for conducting political controversy. It is as necessary to an English statesman in the East that he should be able to write, as it is to a minister in this country that he should be able to speak. It is chiefly by the oratory of a public man here that the nation judges of his powers. It is from the letters and reports of a public man in India that the dispensers of patronage form their estimate of him. In each case, the talent which receives peculiar

encouragement is developed, perhaps at the expense of the other powers. In this country, we sometimes hear men speak above their abilities. It is not very unusual to find gentlemen in the Indian service who write above their abilities. The English politician is a little too much of a debater; the Indian politician a little too much of an essayist.

Of the numerous servants of the Company who have distinguished themselves as framers of minutes and despatches, Hastings stands at the head. He was indeed the person who gave to the official writing of the Indian governments the character which it still retains. He was matched against no common antagonist. But even Francis was forced to acknowledge, with sullen and resentful candor, that there was no contending against the pen of Hastings. And in truth, the Governor-General's power of making out a case, of perplexing what it was inconvenient that people should understand, and of setting in the clearest point of view whatever would bear the light, was incomparable. His style must be praised with some reservation. It was in general forcible, pure and polished; but it was sometimes, though not often, turgid, and, on one or two occasions, even bombastic. Perhaps the fondness of Hastings for Persian literature may have tended to corrupt his taste.

And, since we have referred to his literary tastes, it would be most unjust not to praise the judicious encouragement which, as a ruler, he gave to liberal studies and curious researches. His patronage was extended, with prudent generosity, to voyages, travels, experiments; publications. He did little, it is true, towards introducing into India the learning of the West. To make the young natives of Bengal familiar with Milton and Adam Smith, to substitute the geography, astronomy, and surgery of Europe for the dotage of the Brahminical Superstition, or for the imperfect science

of ancient Greece transfused through Arabian expositions, this was a scheme reserved to crown the beneficent administration of a far more virtuous ruler. Still it is impossible to refuse high commendation to a man who, taken from a ledger to govern an empire, overwhelmed by public business, surrounded by people as busy as himself, and separated by thousands of leagues from almost all literary society, gave, both by his example and by his munificence, a great impulse to learning. In Persian and Arabic literature he was deeply skilled. With the Sanscrit he was not himself acquainted; but those who first brought that language to the knowledge of the European students owed much to his encouragement. It was under his protection that the Asiatic Society commenced its honorable career. That distinguished body selected him to be its first president; but with excellent taste and feeling, he declined the honor in favor of Sir William Jones. But the chief advantage which the students of Oriental letters derived from his patronage remains to be mentioned. The Pundits of Bengal had always looked with great jealousy on the attempts of foreigners to pry into those mysteries which were locked up in the sacred dialect. The Brahminical religion has been persecuted by the Mahommedans. What the Hindoos knew of the spirit of the Portuguese government might warrant them in apprehending persecution from Christians. That apprehension, the wisdom and moderation of Hastings removed. He was the first foreign ruler who succeeded in gaining the confidence of the hereditary priests of India, and who induced them to lay open to English scholars the secrets of the old Brahminical theology and jurisprudence.

It is indeed impossible to deny that, in the great art of inspiring large masses of human beings with confidence and attachment, no ruler ever surpassed Hastings. If he had

made himself popular with the English by giving up the Bengalees to extortion and oppression, or if, on the other hand, he had conciliated the Bengalees and alienated the English, there would have been no cause for wonder. What is peculiar to him is that, being the chief of a small band of strangers, who exercised boundless power over a great indigenous population, he made himself beloved both by the subject many and by the dominant few. The affection felt for him by the civil service was singularly ardent and constant. Through all his disasters and perils, his brethren stood by him with steadfast loyalty. The army, at the same time, loved him as armies had seldom loved any but the greatest chiefs who have led them to victory. Even in his disputes with distinguished military men, he could always count on the support of the military profession. While such was his empire over the hearts of his countrymen, he enjoyed among the natives a popularity, such as other governors have perhaps better merited, but such as no other governor has been able to attain. He spoke their vernacular dialects with facility and precision. He was intimately acquainted with their feelings and usages. On one or two occasions, for great ends, he deliberately acted in defiance of their opinion; but on such occasions he gained more in their respect than he lost in their love. In general, he carefully avoided all that could shock their national or religious prejudices. His administration was indeed in many respects faulty; but the Bengalee standard of good government was not high. Under the Nabobs, the hurricane of Mahratta cavalry had passed annually over the rich alluvial plain. But even the Mahratta shrank from a conflict with the mighty children of the sea; and the immense rice harvests of the Lower Ganges were safely gathered in, under the protection of the English sword. The first English conquerors had been more

rapacious and merciless even than the Mah-rattas ; but that generation had passed away. Defective as was the police, heavy as were the public burdens, it is probable that the oldest man in Bengal could not recollect a season of equal security and prosperity. For the first time within living memory, the province was placed under a government strong enough to prevent others from robbing, and not inclined to play the robber itself. These things inspired good-will. At the same time the constant success of Hastings and the manner in which he extricated himself from every difficulty made him an object of superstitious admiration ; and the more than regal splendor which he sometimes displayed dazzled a people who have much in common with children. Even now, after the lapse of more than fifty years, the natives of India still talk of him as the greatest of the English ; and nurses sing children to sleep with a jingling ballad about the fleet horses and richly caparisoned elephants of Sahib Warren Hostein.

The gravest offence of which Hastings was guilty did not affect his popularity with the people of Bengal ; for those offences were committed against neighboring states. Those offences, as our readers must have perceived, we are not disposed to vindicate ; yet, in order that the censure may be justly apportioned to the transgression, it is fit that the motive of the criminal should be taken into consideration. The motive which prompted the worst acts of Hastings was misdirected and ill-regulated public spirit. The rules of justice, the sentiments of humanity, the plighted faith of treaties, were in his view as nothing, when opposed to the immediate interest of the state. This is no justification, according to the principles either of morality, or of what we believe to be identical with morality, namely, far-sighted policy. Nevertheless the common sense of mankind, which in questions of this

sort seldom goes far wrong, will always recognize a distinction between crimes which originate in an inordinate zeal for the commonwealth, and crimes which originate in selfish cupidity. To the benefit of this distinction Hastings is fairly entitled. There is, we conceive, no reason to suspect that the Rohilla war, the revolution of Benares, or the spoliation of the Princesses of Oude, added a rupee to his fortune. We will not affirm that, in all pecuniary dealings, he showed that punctilious integrity, that dread of the faintest appearance of evil, which is now the glory of the Indian civil service. But when the school in which he had been trained and the temptations to which he was exposed are considered, we are more inclined to praise him for his general uprightness with respect to money, than rigidly to blame him for a few transactions which would now be called indelicate and irregular, but which even now would hardly be designated as corrupt. A rapacious man he certainly was not. Had he been so, he would infallibly have returned to his country the richest subject in Europe. We speak within compass, when we say that, without applying any extraordinary pressure he might easily have obtained from the zemindars of the Company's provinces and from the neighboring princes, in the course of thirteen years, more than three millions sterling, and might have outshone the splendor of Carlton House and of the *Palais Royal*. He brought home a fortune such as a Governor-General, fond of state, and careless of thrift, might easily, during so long a tenure of office, save out of his legal salary. Mrs. Hastings, we are afraid, was less scrupulous. It was generally believed that she accepted presents with great alacrity, and that she thus formed, without the connivance of her husband, a private hoard amounting to several lacs of rupees. We are the more inclined to give credit to this story, because Mr.

Gleig, who cannot but have heard it, does not, as far as we have observed, notice or contradict it.

The influence of Mrs. Hastings over her husband was indeed such that she might easily have obtained much larger sums than she was ever accused of receiving. At length her health began to give way; and the Governor-General, much against his will, was compelled to send her to England. He seems to have loved her with that love which is peculiar to men of strong minds, to men whose affection is not easily won or widely diffused. The talk of Calcutta ran for some time on the luxurious manner in which he fitted up the round-house of an Indiaman for her accommodation, on the profusion of sandal-wood and carved ivory which adorned her cabin, and on the thousands of rupees which had been expended in order to procure for her the society of an agreeable female companion during the voyage. We may remark here that the letters of Hastings to his wife are exceedingly characteristic. They are tender, and full of indications of esteem and confidence; but at the same time, a little more ceremonious than is usual in so intimate a relation. The solemn courtesy with which he compliments "his elegant Marian" reminds us now and then of the dignified air with which Sir Charles Grandison bowed over Miss Byron's hand in the cedar parlor.

After some months, Hastings prepared to follow his wife to England. When it was announced that he was about to quit his office, the feeling of the society which he had so long governed manifested itself by many signs. Addresses poured in from Europeans and Asiatics, from civil functionaries, soldiers and traders. On the day on which he delivered up the keys of office, a crowd of friends and admirers formed a lane to the quay where he embarked. Several barges escorted him far

down the river; and some attached friends refused to quit him till the low coast of Bengal was fading from the view, and till the pilot was leaving the ship.

Of his voyage little is known except that he amused himself with books and with his pen; and that, among the compositions by which he beguiled the tediousness of that long leisure, was a pleasing imitation of Horace's *Otium Divos rogat*. The little poem was inscribed to Mr. Shore, afterwards Lord Teignmouth, a man of whose integrity, humanity, and honor, it is impossible to speak too highly, but who, like some other excellent members of the civil service, extended to the conduct of his friend Hastings an indulgence of which his own conduct never stood in need.

The voyage was, for those times, very speedy. Hastings was little more than four months on the sea. In June, 1785, he landed at Plymouth, posted to London, appeared at Court, paid his respects to Leadenhall Street, and then retired with his wife to Cheltenham.

He was greatly pleased with his reception. The King treated him with marked distinction. The Queen, who had already incurred much censure on account of the favor which, in spite of the ordinary severity of her virtue, she had shown to the "elegant Marian," was not less gracious to Hastings. The directors received him in a solemn sitting; and their chairman read to him a vote of thanks which they had passed without one dissentient voice. "I find myself," said Hastings, in a letter written about a quarter of a year after his arrival in England, "I find myself everywhere, and universally, treated with evidences, apparent even to my own observation, that I possess the good opinion of my country."

The confident and exulting tone of his correspondence about this time is the more remarkable, because he had already received ample notice of the attack which was in prep-

aration. Within a week after he landed at Plymouth, Burke gave notice in the House of Commons of a motion seriously affecting a gentleman lately returned from India. The session, however, was then so far advanced, that it was impossible to enter on so extensive and important a subject.

Hastings, it is clear, was not sensible of the danger of his position. Indeed that sagacity, that judgment, that readiness in devising expedients, which had distinguished him in the East, seemed now to have forsaken him ; not that his abilities were at all impaired ; not that he was not still the same man who had triumphed over Francis and Nuncomar, who had made the Chief Justice and the Nabob Vizier his tools, who had deposed Cheyte Sing, and repelled Hyder Ali. But an oak, as Mr. Grattan finely said, should not be transplanted at fifty. A man who, having left England when a boy, returns to it after thirty or forty years passed in India, will find, be his talents what they may, that he has much both to learn and to unlearn before he can take a place among English statesmen. The working of a representative system, the war of parties, the arts of debate, the influence of the press, are startling novelties to him. Surrounded on every side by new machines and new tactics he is as much bewildered as Hannibal would have been at Waterloo, or Themistocles at Trafalgar. His very acuteness deludes him. His very vigor causes him to stumble. The more correct his maxims, when applied to the state of society to which he is accustomed, the more certain they are to lead him astray. This was strikingly the case with Hastings. In India he had a bad hand ; but he was master of the game, and he won every stake. In England he held excellent cards, if he had known how to play them ; and it was chiefly by his own errors that he was brought to the verge of ruin.

Of all his errors the most serious was per-

haps the choice of a champion. Clive, in similar circumstances, had made a singularly happy selection. He put himself into the hands of Wedderburne, afterwards Lord Loughborough, one of the few great advocates who have also been great in the House of Commons. To the defence of Clive, therefore, nothing was wanting, neither learning nor knowledge of the world, neither forensic acuteness nor that eloquence which charms political assemblies. Hastings intrusted his interests to a very different person, a major in the Bengal army, named Scott. This gentleman had been sent over from India some time before as the agent of the Governor-General. It was rumored that his services were rewarded with Oriental munificence; and we believe that he received much more than Hastings could conveniently spare. The Major obtained a seat in Parliament, and was there regarded as the organ of his employer. It was evidently impossible that a gentleman so situated could speak with the authority which belongs to an independent position. Nor had the agent of Hastings the talents necessary for obtaining the ear of an assembly which, accustomed to listen to great orators, had naturally become fastidious. He was always on his legs; he was very tedious; and he had only one topic, the merits and wrongs of Hastings. Everybody who knows the House of Commons will easily guess what followed. The Major was soon considered as the greatest bore of his time. His exertions were not confined to Parliament. There was hardly a day on which the newspapers did not contain some puff upon Hastings, signed *Asiaticus* or *Bengalensis*, but known to be written by the indefatigable Scott; and hardly a month in which some bulky pamphlet on the same subject, and from the same pen, did not pass to the trunkmakers and the pastrycooks. As to this gentleman's capacity for conducting a delicate question through Parliament, our

readers will want no evidence beyond that which they will find in letters preserved in these volumes. We will give a single specimen of his temper and judgment. He designated the greatest man then living as "that reptile Mr. Burke."

In spite, however, of this unfortunate choice, the general aspect of affairs was favorable to Hastings. The King was on his side. The Company and its servants were zealous in his cause. Among public men he had many ardent friends. Such were Lord Mansfield, who had outlived the vigor of his body, but not that of his mind; and Lord Lansdowne, who, though unconnected with any party, retained the importance which belongs to great talents and knowledge. The ministers were generally believed to be favorable to the late Governor-General. They owed their power to the clamor which had been raised against Mr. Fox's East India Bill. The authors of that bill, when accused of invading vested rights, and of setting up powers unknown to the constitution, had defended themselves by pointing to the crimes of Hastings, and by arguing that abuses so extraordinary justified extraordinary measures. Those who, by opposing that bill, had raised themselves to the head of affairs, would naturally be inclined to extenuate the evils which had been made the plea for administering so violent a remedy; and such, in fact, was their general disposition. The Lord Chancellor Thurlow, in particular, whose great place and force of intellect gave him a weight in the government inferior only to that of Mr. Pitt, espoused the cause of Hastings with indecorous violence. Mr. Pitt, though he had censured many parts of the Indian system, had studiously abstained from saying a word against the late chief of the Indian government. To Major Scott, indeed, the young minister had in private extolled Hastings as a great, a wonderful man, who had the highest claims on the government. There

was only one objection to granting all that so eminent a servant of the public could ask. The resolution of censure still remained on the journals of the house of Commons. That resolution was, indeed, unjust; but, till it was rescinded, could the minister advise the King to bestow any mark of approbation on the person censured? If Major Scott is to be trusted, Mr. Pitt declared that this was the only reason which prevented the advisers of the Crown from conferring a peerage on the late Governor-General. Mr. Dundas was the only important member of the administration who was deeply committed to a different view of the subject. He had moved the resolution which created the difficulty; but even from him little was to be apprehended. Since he had presided over the committee on Eastern affairs, great changes had taken place. He was surrounded by new allies; he had fixed his hopes on new objects; and whatever may have been his good qualities,—and he had many,—flattery itself never reckoned rigid consistency in the number.

From the Ministry, therefore, Hastings had every reason to expect support; and the Ministry was very powerful. The Opposition was loud and vehement against him. But the Opposition, though formidable from the wealth and influence of some of its members, and from the admirable talents and eloquence of others, was outnumbered in parliament, and odious throughout the country. Nor, as far as we can judge, was the Opposition generally desirous to engage in so serious an undertaking as the impeachment of an Indian Governor. Such an impeachment must last for years. It must impose on the chiefs of the party an immense load of labor. Yet it could scarcely, in any manner, affect the event of the great political game. The followers of the coalition were therefore more inclined to revile Hastings than to prosecute him. They lost no opportunity of coupling his name with the names of the most

hateful tyrants of whom history makes mention. The wits of Brooks's aimed their keenest sarcasms both at his public and at his domestic life. Some fine diamonds which he had presented, as it was rumored, to the royal family, and a certain richly carved ivory bed which the Queen had done him the honor to accept from him, were favorite subjects of ridicule. One lively poet proposed, that the great acts of the fair Marian's present husband should be immortalized by the pencil of his predecessor; and that Imhoff should be employed to embellish the House of Commons with paintings of the bleeding Rohillas, of Nuncomar swinging, of Cheyte Sing letting himself down to the Ganges. Another, in an exquisitely humorous parody of Virgil's third eclogue, propounded the question, what that mineral could be of which the rays had power to make the most austere of princesses the friend of a wanton. A third described, with gay malevolence, the gorgeous appearance of Mrs. Hastings at St. James's, the galaxy of jewels, torn from Indian Begums, which adorned her head dress, her necklace gleaming with future votes, and the depending questions that shone upon her ears. Satirical attacks of this description, and perhaps a motion for a vote of censure, would have satisfied the great body of the Opposition. But there were two men whose indignation was not to be so appeased, Philip Francis and Edmund Burke.

Francis had recently entered the house of Commons, and had already established a character there for industry and ability. He labored indeed under one most unfortunate defect, want of fluency. But he occasionally expressed himself with a dignity and energy worthy of the greatest orators. Before he had been many days in parliament, he incurred the bitter dislike of Pitt, who constantly treated him with as much asperity as the laws of debate would allow. Neither lapse of years nor change of

scene had mitigated the enmities which Francis had brought back from the East. After his usual fashion, he mistook his malevolence for virtue, nursed it, as preachers tell us that we ought to nurse our good dispositions, and paraded it, on all occasions, with Pharisaical ostentation.

The zeal of Burke was still fiercer, but it was far purer. Men unable to understand the elevation of his mind have tried to find out some discreditable motive for the vehemence and pertinacity which he showed on this occasion. But they have altogether failed. The idle story that he had some private slight to revenge has long been given up, even by the advocates of Hastings. Mr. Gleig supposes that Burke was actuated by party spirit, that he retained a bitter remembrance of the fall of the coalition, that he attributed that fall to the exertions of the East India interest, and that he considered Hastings as the head and the representative of that interest. This explanation seems to be sufficiently refuted by a reference to dates. The hostility of Burke to Hastings commenced long before the coalition; and lasted long after Burke had become a strenuous supporter of those by whom the coalition had been defeated. It began when Burke and Fox, closely allied together, were attacking the influence of the crown, and calling for peace with the American republic. It continued till Burke, alienated from Fox, and loaded with the favors of the crown, died, preaching a crusade against the French republic. We surely cannot attribute to the events of 1784 an enmity which began in 1781, and which retained undiminished force long after persons far more deeply implicated than Hastings in the events of 1784 had been cordially forgiven. And why should we look for any other explanation of Burke's conduct than that which we find on the surface? The plain truth is that Hastings had committed some great crimes,

and that the thought of those crimes made the blood of Burke boil in his veins. For Burke was a man in whom compassion for suffering, and hatred of injustice and tyranny, were as strong as in Las Casas or Clarkson. And although in him, as in Las Casas and in Clarkson, these noble feelings were alloyed with the infirmity which belongs to human nature, he is, like them, entitled to this great praise, that he devoted years of intense labor to the service of a people with whom he had neither blood nor language, neither religion nor manners in common, and from whom no requital, no thanks, no applause could be expected.

His knowledge of India was such as few, even of those Europeans who have passed many years in that country, have attained, and such as certainly was never attained by any public man who had not quitted Europe. He had studied the history, the laws, and the usages of the East with an industry, such as is seldom found united to so much genius and so much sensibility. Others have perhaps been equally laborious, and have collected an equal mass of materials. But the manner in which Burke brought his higher powers of intellect to work on statements of facts, and on tables of figures, was peculiar to himself. In every part of those huge bales of Indian information which repelled almost all other readers, his mind, at once philosophical and poetical, found something to instruct or to delight. His reason analyzed and digested those vast and shapeless masses; his imagination animated and colored them. Out of darkness and dulness, and confusion, he formed a multitude of ingenious theories and vivid pictures. He had, in the highest degree, that noble faculty whereby man is able to live in the past and in the future, in the distant and in the unreal. India and its inhabitants were not to him, as to most Englishmen, mere names and abstractions, but a real country and a real people. The burning

sun, the strange vegetation of the palm and the cocoa tree, the ricefield, the tank, the huge trees, older than the Mogul empire, under which the village crowds assemble, the thatched roof of the peasant's hut, the rich tracery of the mosque where the imaum prays with his face to Mecca, the drums, and banners, and gaudy idols, the devotee swinging in the air, the graceful maiden with the pitcher on her head, descending the steps to the river-side, the black faces, the long beards, the yellow streaks of sect, the turbans and the flowing robes, the spears and the silver maces, the elephants with their canopies of state, the gorgeous palanquin of the prince, and the close litter of the noble lady, all these things were to him as the objects amidst which his own life had been passed, as the objects which lay on the road between Beaconsfield and St. James's Street. All India was present to the eye of his mind, from the halls where suitors laid gold and perfumes at the feet of sovereigns to the wild moor where the gypsy camp was pitched, from the bazaar, humming like a bee-hive with the crowd of buyers and sellers, to the jungle where the lonely courier shakes his bunch of iron rings to scare away the hyenas. He had just as lively an idea of the insurrection at Benares as of Lord George Gordon's riots, and of the execution of Nuncomar as of the execution of Dr. Dodd. Oppression in Bengal was to him the same thing as oppression in the streets of London.

He saw that Hastings had been guilty of some most unjustifiable acts. All that followed was natural and necessary in a mind like Burke's. His imagination and his passions, once excited, hurried him beyond the bounds of justice and good sense. His reason, powerful as it was, became the slave of feelings which it should have controlled. His indignation, virtuous in its origin, acquired too much of the character of personal aversion. He could see

no mitigating circumstance, no redeeming merit. His temper, which, though generous and affectionate, had always been irritable, had now been made almost savage by bodily infirmities and mental vexations. Conscious of great powers and great virtues, he found himself, in age and poverty, a mark for the hatred of a perfidious court and a deluded people. In Parliament his eloquence was out of date. A young generation, which knew him not, had filled the House. Whenever he rose to speak, his voice was drowned by the unseemly interruption of lads who were in their cradles when his orations on the Stamp Act called forth the applause of the great Earl of Chatham. These things had produced on his proud and sensitive spirit an effect at which we cannot wonder. He could no longer discuss any question with calmness, or made allowance for honest differences of opinion. Those who think that he was more violent and acrimonious in debates about India than on other occasions are ill informed respecting the last years of his life. In the discussions on the Commercial Treaty with the Court of Versailles, on the Regency, on the French Revolution, he showed even more virulence than in conducting the impeachment. Indeed it may be remarked that the very persons who called him a mischievous maniac, for condemning in burning words the Rohilla war and the spoliation of the Begums, exalted him into a prophet as soon as he began to declaim, with greater vehemence, and not with greater reason, against the taking of the Bastille and the insults offered to Marie Antoinette. To us he appears to have been neither a maniac in the former case, nor a prophet in the latter, but in both cases a great and good man, led into extravagance by a sensibility which domineered over all his faculties.

It may be doubted whether the personal antipathy of Francis, or the nobler indignation of Burke, would have led their party to adopt

extreme measures against Hastings, if his own conduct had been judicious. He should have felt that, great as his public services had been, he was not faultless, and should have been content to make his escape, without aspiring to the honors of a triumph. He and his agent took a different view. They were impatient for the rewards which, as they conceived, were deferred only till Burke's attack should be over. They accordingly resolved to force on a decisive action with an enemy for whom, if they had been wise, they would have made a bridge of gold. On the first day of the session of 1786, Major Scott reminded Burke of the notice given in the preceding year, and asked whether it was seriously intended to bring any charge against the late Governor-General. This challenge left no course open to the Opposition, except to come forward as accusers, or to acknowledge themselves calumniators. The administration of Hastings had not been so blameless, nor was the great party of Fox and North so feeble, that it could be prudent to venture on so bold a defiance. The leaders of the Opposition instantly returned the only answer which they could with honor return ; and the whole party was irrevocably pledged to a prosecution.

Burke began his operations by applying for Papers. Some of the documents for which he asked were refused by the ministers, who, in the debate, held language such as strongly confirmed the prevailing opinion, that they intended to support Hastings. In April, the charges were laid on the table. They had been drawn by Burke with great ability, though in a form too much resembling that of a pamphlet. Hastings was furnished with a copy of the accusation ; and it was intimated to him that he might, if he thought fit, be heard in his own defence at the bar of the Commons.

Here again Hastings was pursued by the same fatality which had attended him ever

since the day when he set foot on English ground. It seemed to be decreed that this man, so politic and so successful in the East, should commit nothing but blunders in Europe. Any judicious adviser would have told him that the best thing which he could do would be to make an eloquent, forcible, and affecting oration at the bar of the House : but that, if he could not trust himself to speak, and found it necessary to read, he ought to be as concise as possible. Audiences accustomed to extemporaneous debating of the highest excellence are always impatient of long written compositions. Hastings, however, sat down as he would have done at the Government-house in Bengal, and prepared a paper of immense length. That paper, if recorded on the consultations of an Indian administration, would have been justly praised as a very able minute. But it was now out of place. It fell flat, as the best written defence must have fallen flat, on an assembly accustomed to the animated and strenuous conflicts of Pitt and Fox. The members, as soon as their curiosity about the face and demeanor of so eminent a stranger was satisfied, walked away to dinner, and left Hastings to tell his story till midnight to the clerks and the Serjeant-at-arms.

All preliminary steps having been duly taken, Burke, in the beginning of June, brought forward the charge relating to the Rohilla war. He acted discreetly in placing this accusation in the van ; for Dundas had formerly moved, and the House had adopted, a resolution condemning, in the most severe terms, the policy followed by Hastings with regard to Rohilcund, Dundas had little, or rather, nothing to say in defence of his own consistency ; but he put a bold face on the matter, and opposed the motion. Among other things, he declared that, though he still thought the Rohilla war unjustifiable, he considered the services which Hastings had subsequently rendered to the

state as sufficient to atone even for so great an offence. Pitt did not speak, but voted with Dundas : and Hastings was absolved by a hundred and nineteen votes against sixty-seven.

Hastings was now confident of victory. It seemed indeed, that he had reason to be so. The Rohilla war was, of all his measures, that which his accusers might with greatest advantage assail. It had been condemned by the Court of Directors. It had been condemned by the House of Commons. It had been condemned by Mr. Dundas, who had since become the chief minister of the Crown for Indian affairs. Yet Burke, having chosen this strong ground, had been completely defeated on it. That having failed here, he should succeed on any point, was generally thought impossible. It was rumored at the clubs and coffee-houses that one or perhaps two more charges would be brought forward, that if, on those charges, the sense of the House of Commons should be against impeachment, the Opposition would let the matter drop, that Hastings would be immediately raised to the peerage, decorated with the star of the Bath, sworn of the privy council, and invited to lend the assistance of his talents and experience to the India board. Lord Thurlow, indeed, some months before, had spoken with contempt of the scruples which prevented Pitt from calling Hastings to the House of Lords ; and had even said that, if the Chancellor of the Exchequer was afraid of the Commons, there was nothing to prevent the Keeper of the Great Seal from taking the royal pleasure about a patent of peerage. The very title was chosen. Hastings was to be Lord Daylesford. For, through all changes of scene and changes of fortune, remained unchanged his attachment to the spot which had witnessed the greatness and the fall of his family, and which had borne so great a part in the first dreams of his young ambition.

But in a very few days these fair prospects

were overcast. On the thirteenth of June, Mr. Fox brought forward, with great ability and eloquence, the charge respecting the treatment of Cheyte Sing. Francis followed on the same side. The friends of Hastings were in high spirits when Pitt rose. With his usual abundance and felicity of language, the Minister gave his opinion on the case. He maintained that the Governor-General was justified in calling on the Rajah of Benares for pecuniary assistance, and imposing a fine when that assistance was contumaciously withheld. He also thought that the conduct of the Governor-General during the insurrection had been distinguished by ability and presence of mind. He censured, with great bitterness, the conduct of Francis, both in India and in Parliament, as most dishonest and malignant. The necessary inference from Pitt's arguments seemed to be that Hastings ought to be honorably acquitted; and both the friends and the opponents of the Minister expected from him a declaration to that effect. To the astonishment of all parties, he concluded by saying that, though he thought it right in Hastings to fine Cheyte Sing for contumacy, yet the amount of the fine was too great for the occasion. On this ground, and on this ground alone, did Mr. Pitt, applauding every other part of the conduct of Hastings with regard to Benares, declare that he should vote in favor of Mr. Fox's motion.

The House was thunderstruck; and it well might be so. For the wrong done to Cheyte Sing, even had it been as flagitious as Fox and Francis contended, was a trifle when compared with the horrors which had been inflicted on Rohilcund. But if Mr. Pitt's view of the case of Cheyte Sing were correct, there was no ground for an impeachment, or even for a vote of censure. If the offence of Hastings was really no more than this, that, having a right to impose a mulct, the amount of which mulct was not defined, but was left to be settled by

his discretion, he had, not for his own advantage, but for that of the state, demanded too much, was this an offence which required a criminal proceeding of the highest solemnity, a criminal proceeding, to which, during sixty years, no public functionary had been subjected? We can see, we think, in what way a man of sense and integrity might have been induced to take any course respecting Hastings, except the course which Mr. Pitt took. Such a man might have thought a great example necessary, for the preventing of injustice, and for the vindicating of the national honor, and might, on that ground, have voted for impeachment both on the Rohilla charge, and on the Benares charge. Such a man might have thought that the offences of Hastings had been atoned for by great services, and might, on that ground, have voted against the impeachment on both charges. With great diffidence we give it as our opinion that the most correct course would, on the whole, have been to impeach on the Rohilla charge, and to acquit on the Benares charge. Had the Benares charge appeared to us in the same light in which it appears to Mr. Pitt, we should, without hesitation, have voted for acquittal on that charge. The one course which it is inconceivable that any man of a tenth part of Mr. Pitt's abilities can have honestly taken was the course which he took. He acquitted Hastings on the Rohilla charge. He softened down the Benares charge till it became no charge at all; and then he pronounced that it contained matter for impeachment.

Nor must it be forgotten that the principal reason assigned by the ministry for not impeaching Hastings on account of the Rohilla war was this, that the delinquencies of the early part of his administration had been atoned for by the excellence of the later part. Was it not most extraordinary that men who had held this language could afterwards vote

that the later part of his administration furnished matter for no less than twenty articles of impeachment? They first represented the conduct of Hastings in 1780 and 1781 as so highly meritorious that, like works of supererogation in the Catholic theology, it ought to be efficacious for the cancelling of former offences; and they then prosecuted him for his conduct in 1780 and 1781.

The general astonishment was the greater, because, only twenty-four hours before, the members on whom the minister could depend had received the usual notes from the Treasury, begging them to be in their places and to vote against Mr. Fox's motion. It was asserted by Mr. Hastings, that, early in the morning of the very day on which the debate took place, Dundas called on Pitt, woke him, and was closeted with him many hours. The result of this conference was a determination to give up the late Governor-General to the vengeance of the Opposition. It was impossible even for the most powerful minister to carry all his followers with him in so strange a course. Several persons high in office, the Attorney-General, Mr. Grenville, and Lord Mulgrave, divided against Mr. Pitt. But the devoted adherents who stood by the head of the government without asking questions were sufficiently numerous to turn the scale. A hundred and nineteen members voted for Mr. Fox's motion; seventy-nine against it. Dundas silently followed Pitt.

That good and great man, the late William Wilberforce, often related the events of this remarkable night. He described the amazement of the House, and the bitter reflections which were muttered against the Prime Minister by some of the habitual supporters of government. Pitt himself appeared to feel that his conduct required some explanation. He left the treasury bench, sat for some time next to Mr. Wilberforce, and very earnestly declared that

he had found it impossible, as a man of conscience, to stand any longer by Hastings. The business, he said, was too bad. Mr. Wilberforce, we are bound to add, fully believed that his friend was sincere, and that the suspicions to which this mysterious affair gave rise were altogether unfounded.

Those suspicions, indeed, were such as it is painful to mention. The friends of Hastings, most of whom, it is to be observed, generally supported the administration, affirmed that the motive of Pitt and Dundas was jealousy. Hastings was personally a favorite with the King. He was the idol of the East India Company and of its servants. If he were absolved by the Commons, seated among the Lords, admitted to the Board of Control, closely allied with the strong-minded and imperious Thurlow, was it not almost certain that he would soon draw to himself the entire management of Eastern affairs? Was it not possible that he might become a formidable rival in the cabinet? It had probably got abroad that very singular communications had taken place between Thurlow and Major Scott, and that, if the First Lord of the Treasury was afraid to recommend Hastings for a peerage, the Chancellor was ready to take the responsibility of that step on himself. Of all ministers, Pitt was the least likely to submit with patience to such an encroachment on his functions. If the Commons impeached Hastings, all danger was at an end. The proceeding, however it might terminate, would probably last some years. In the meantime, the accused person would be excluded from honors and public employments, and could scarcely venture even to pay his duty at court. Such were the motives attributed by a great part of the public to the young minister, whose ruling passion was generally believed to be avarice of power.

The prorogation soon interrupted the discussions respecting Hastings. In the following

year, those discussions were resumed. The charge touching the spoliation of the Begums was brought forward by Sheridan, in a speech which was so imperfectly reported that it may be said to be wholly lost, but which was, without doubt, the most elaborately brilliant of all the productions of his ingenious mind. The impression which it produced was such as has never been equalled. He sat down, not merely amidst cheering, but amidst the loud clapping of hands, in which the Lords below the bar and the strangers in the gallery joined. The excitement of the House was such that no other speaker could obtain a hearing ; and the debate was adjourned. The ferment spread fast through the town. Within four and twenty hours, Sheridan was offered a thousand pounds for the copyright of the speech, if he would himself correct it for the press. The impression made by this remarkable display of eloquence on severe and experienced critics, whose discernment may be supposed to have been quickened by emulation, was deep and permanent. Mr. Windham, twenty years later, said that the speech deserved all its fame, and was, in spite of some faults of taste, such as were seldom wanting either in literary or in the parliamentary performances of Sheridan, the finest that had been delivered within the memory of man. Mr. Fox, about the same time, being asked by the late Lord Holland what was the best speech ever made in the House of Commons, assigned the first place, without hesitation, to the great oration of Sheridan on the Oude charge.

When the debate was resumed, the tide ran so strongly against the accused that his friends were coughed and scraped down. Pitt declared himself for Sheridan's motion ; and the question was carried by a hundred and seventy-five votes against sixty-eight.

The Opposition, flushed with victory and strongly supported by the public sympathy,

proceeded to bring forward a succession of charges relating chiefly to pecuniary transactions. The friends of Hastings were discouraged, and, having now no hope of being able to avert an impeachment, were not very strenuous in their exertions. At length the House, having agreed to twenty articles of charge, directed Burke to go before the Lords, and to impeach the late Governor-General of High Crimes and Misdemeanors. Hastings was at the same time arrested by the Serjeant-at-arms and carried to the bar of the Peers.

The session was now within ten days of its close. It was, therefore, impossible that any progress could be made in the trial till the next year. Hastings was admitted to bail; and further proceedings were postponed till the the Houses should re-assemble.

When Parliament met in the following winter, the Commons proceeded to elect a committee for managing the impeachment. Burke stood at the head; and with him were associated most of the leading members of the Opposition. But when the name of Francis was read a fierce contention arose. It was said that Francis and Hastings were notoriously on bad terms, that they had been at feud during many years, that on one occasion their mutual aversion had impelled them to seek each other's lives, and that it would be improper and indelicate to select a private enemy to be a public accuser. It was urged on the other side with great force, particularly by Mr. Windham, that impartiality, though the first duty of a judge, had never been reckoned among the qualities of an advocate; that in the ordinary administration of criminal justice among the English, the aggrieved party, the very last person who ought to be admitted into the jury-box, is the prosecutor; that what was wanted in a manager was, not that he should be free from bias, but that he should be able, well-informed, energetic, and active. The ability and information of

Francis was admitted ; and the very animosity with which he was reproached, whether a virtue or a vice, was at least a pledge for his energy and activity. It seems difficult to refute these arguments. But the inveterate hatred borne by Francis to Hastings had excited general disgust. The House decided that Francis should not be a manager. Pitt voted with the majority, Dundas with the minority.

In the meantime, the preparations for the trial had proceeded rapidly ; and on the thirteenth of February, 1788, the sittings of the Court commenced. There have been spectacles more dazzling to the eye, more gorgeous with jewelry and cloth of gold, more attractive to grown-up children, than that which was then exhibited at Westminster ; but, perhaps, there never was a spectacle so well calculated to strike a highly cultivated, a reflecting, an imaginative mind. All the various kinds of interest which belong to the near and to the distant, to the present and to the past, were collected on one spot and in one hour. All the talents and all the accomplishments which are developed by liberty and civilization were now displayed, with every advantage that could be derived both from co-operation and from contrast. Every step in the proceedings carried the mind either backward, through many troubled centuries, to the days when the foundations of our constitution were laid ; or far away, over boundless seas and deserts, to dusky nations living under strange stars, worshipping strange gods, and writing strange characters from right to left. The High Court of Parliament was to sit, according to forms handed down from the days of the Plantagenets, on an Englishman accused of exercising tyranny over the lord of the holy city of Benares, and over the ladies of the princely house of Oude.

The place was worthy of such a trial. It was the great house of William Rufus, the hall

which had resounded with acclamations at the inauguration of thirty kings, the hall which had witnessed the just sentence of Bacon and the just absolution of Somers, the hall where the eloquence of Strafford had for a moment awed and melted a victorious party inflamed with just resentment, the hall where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with the placid courage which has half redeemed his fame. Neither military nor civil pomp was wanting. The avenues were lined with grenadiers. The streets were kept clear by cavalry. The peers, robed in gold and ermine, were marshalled by the heralds under Garter King-at-arms. The judges in their vestments of state attended to give advice on points of law. Near a hundred and seventy lords, three fourths of the Upper House as the Upper House then was, walked in solemn order from their usual place of assembling to the tribunal. The junior Baron present led the way, George Elliott, Lord Heathfield, recently ennobled for his memorable defence of Gibraltar against the fleets and armies of France and Spain. The long procession was closed by the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshal of the realm, by the great dignitaries, and by the brothers and sons of the King. Last of all came the Prince of Wales, conspicuous by his fine person and noble bearing. The gray old walls were hung with scarlet. The long galleries were crowded by an audience such as has rarely excited the fears or the emulations of an orator. There were gathered together, from all parts of a great, free, enlightened, and prosperous empire, grace and female loveliness, wit and learning, the representatives of every science and of every art. There were seated round the Queen the fair-haired young daughters of the House of Brunswick. There the Ambassadors of great Kings and Commonwealths gazed with admiration on a spectacle which no other country in the world could present.

There Siddons, in the prime of her majestic beauty, looked with emotion on a scene surpassing all the imitations of the stage. There the historian of the Roman Empire thought of the days when Cicero pleaded the cause of Sicily against Verres, and when, before a senate which still retained some show of freedom, Tacitus thundered against the oppressor of Africa. There were seen side by side the greatest painter and the greatest scholar of the age. The spectacle had allured Reynolds from that easel which preserved to us the thoughtful foreheads of so many writers and statesmen, and the sweet smiles of so many noble matrons. It had induced Parr to suspend his labors in that dark and profound mine from which he had extracted a vast treasure of erudition, a treasure too often buried in the earth, too often paraded with injudicious and inelegant ostentation, but still precious, massive, and splendid. There appeared the voluptuous charms of her to whom the heir of the throne had in secret plighted his faith. There too was she, the beautiful mother of a beautiful race, the Saint Cecilia, whose delicate features, lighted up by love and music, art has rescued from the common decay. There were the members of that brilliant society which quoted, criticised, and exchanged repartees, under the rich peacock-hangings of Mrs. Montague. And there the ladies whose lips, more persuasive than those of Fox himself, had carried the Westminster election against palace and treasury, shone around Georgiana Duchess of Devonshire.

The Serjeants made proclamation. Hastings advanced to the bar, and bent his knee. The culprit was indeed not unworthy of that great presence. He had ruled an extensive and populous country, had made laws and treaties, had sent forth armies, had set up and pulled down princes. And in his high place he had so borne himself, that all had feared him, that most had loved him, and that hatred

itself could deny him no title to glory, except virtue. He looked like a great man, and not like a bad man. A person small and emaciated, yet deriving dignity from a carriage which, while it indicated deference to the court, indicated also habitual self-possession and self-respect, a high and intellectual forehead, a brow pensive, but not gloomy, a mouth of inflexible decision, a face pale and worn, but serene, on which was written, as legibly as under the picture in the council-chamber at Calcutta, *Mens æqua in arduis*; such was the aspect with which the great Proconsul presented himself to his judges.

His council accompanied him, men all of whom were afterwards raised by their talents and learning to the highest posts in their profession, the bold and strong-minded Law, afterwards Chief Justice of the King's Bench; the more humane and eloquent Dallas, afterwards Chief Justice of the Common Pleas; and Plomer whom, near twenty years later, successfully conducted in the same high court the defence of Lord Melville, and subsequently became Vice-chancellor and Master of the Rolls.

But neither the culprit nor his advocates attracted so much notice as the accusers. In the midst of the blaze of red drapery, a space had been fitted up with green benches and tables for the Commons. The managers, with Burke at their head, appeared in full dress. The collectors of gossip did not fail to remark that even Fox, generally so regardless of his appearance, had paid to the illustrious tribunal the compliment of wearing a bag and sword. Pitt had refused to be one of the conductors of the impeachment; and his commanding, copious, and sonorous eloquence was wanting to that great muster of various talents. Age and blindness had unfitted Lord North for the duties of a public prosecutor; and his friends were left without the help of his excellent

sense, his tact, and his urbanity. But, in spite of the absence of these two distinguished members of the Lower House, the box in which the managers stood contained an array of speakers such as perhaps had not appeared together since the great age of Athenian eloquence. There were Fox and Sheridan, the English Demosthenes and the English Hyperides. There was Burke, ignorant indeed, or negligent of the art of adapting his reasonings and his style to the capacity and taste of his hearers, but in amplitude of comprehension and richness of imagination superior to every orator, ancient or modern. There, with eyes reverentially fixed on Burke, appeared the finest gentleman of the age, his form developed by every manly exercise, his face beaming with intelligence and spirit, the ingenious, the chivalrous, the high-souled Windham. Nor, though surrounded by such men, did the youngest manager pass unnoticed. At an age when most of those who distinguish themselves in life are still contending for prizes and fellowships at college, he had won for himself a conspicuous place in parliament. No advantage of fortune or connection was wanting that could set off to the height his splendid talents and his unblemished honor. At twenty-three he had been thought worthy to be ranked with the veteran statesmen who appeared as the delegates of the British Commons, at the bar of the British nobility. All who stood at that bar, save him alone, are gone, culprit, advocates, accusers. To the generation which is now in the vigor of life, he is the sole representative of a great age which has passed away. But those who, within the last ten years, have listened with delight, till the morning sun shone on the tapestries of the House of Lords, to the lofty and animated eloquence of Charles Earl Grey, are able to form some estimate of the powers of a race of men among whom he was not the foremost.

The charges and the answers of Hastings were first read. The ceremony occupied two whole days, and was rendered less tedious than it would otherwise have been by the silver voice and just emphasis of Cowper, the Clerk of the court, a near relation of the amiable poet. On the third day Burke rose. Four sittings were occupied by his opening speech, which was intended to be a general introduction to all the charges. With an exuberance of thought and a splendor of diction which more than satisfied the highly raised expectation of the audience, he described the character and institutions of the natives of India, recounted the circumstances in which the Asiatic empire of Britain had originated, and set forth the constitution of the Company and of the English presidencies. Having thus attempted to communicate to his hearers an idea of Eastern society, as vivid as that which existed in his own mind, he proceeded to arraign the administration of Hastings as systematically conducted in defiance of morality and public law. The energy and pathos of the great orator extorted expressions of unwonted admiration from the stern and hostile Chancellor, and, for a moment, seemed to pierce even the resolute heart of the defendant. The ladies in the galleries, unaccustomed to such displays of eloquence, excited by the solemnity of the occasion, and perhaps not unwilling to display their taste and sensibility, were in a state of uncontrollable emotion. Handkerchiefs were pulled out; smelling bottles were handed round; hysterical sobs and screams were heard; and Mrs. Sheridan was carried out in a fit. At length the orator concluded. Raising his voice till the old arches of Irish oak resounded, "Therefore," said he, "hath it with all confidence been ordered, by the Commons of Great Britain, that I impeach Warren Hastings of high crimes and misdemeanors. I impeach him in the name of the Commons'

House of Parliament, whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation, whose ancient honor he has sullied. I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden under foot, and whose country he has turned into a desert. Lastly, in the name of human nature itself, in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and oppressor of all !”

When the deep murmur of various emotions had subsided, Mr. Fox rose to address the Lords respecting the course of proceeding to be followed. The wish of the accusers was that the Court would bring to a close the investigation of the first charge before the second was opened. The wish of Hastings and of his counsel was that the managers should open all the charges, and produce all the evidence for the prosecution, before the defence began. The Lords retired to their own House to consider the question. The Chancellor took the side of Hastings. Lord Loughborough, who was now in opposition, supported the demand of the managers. The division showed which way the inclination of the tribunal leaned. A majority of near three to one decided in favor of the course for which Hastings contended.

When the Court sat again, Mr. Fox, assisted by Mr. Gray, opened the charge respecting Cheyte Sing, and several days were spent in reading papers and hearing witnesses. The next article was that relating to the Princesses of Oude. The conduct of this part of the case was intrusted to Sheridan. The curiosity of the public to hear him was unbounded. His sparkling and highly finished declamation lasted two days ; but the Hall was crowded to suffocation during the whole time. It was said that fifty guineas had been paid for a single ticket. Sheridan, when he concluded, contrived, with a knowledge of stage effect which his father

might have envied, to sink back, as if exhausted, into the arms of Burke, who hugged him with the energy of generous admiration.

June was now far advanced. The session could not last much longer ; and the progress which had been made in the impeachment was not very satisfactory. There were twenty charges. On two only of these had even the case for the prosecution been heard ; and it was now a year since Hastings had been admitted to bail.

The interest taken by the public in the trial was great when the Court began to sit, and rose to the height when Sheridan spoke on the charge relating to the Begums. From that time the excitement went down fast. The spectacle had lost the attraction of novelty. The great displays of rhetoric were over. What was behind was not of a nature to entice men of letters from their books in the morning, or to tempt ladies who had left the masquerade at two to be out of bed before eight. There remained examinations and cross-examinations. There remained statements of accounts. There remained the reading of papers, filled with words unintelligible to English ears, with lacs and crores, zemindars and aumils, sunnuds and perwannahs, jaghires and nuzzurs. There remained bickerings, not always carried on with the best taste or with the best temper, between the managers of the impeachment and the counsel for the defence, particularly between Mr. Burke and Mr. Law. There remained the endless marches and countermarches of the Peers between their House and the Hall ; for as often as a point of law was to be discussed, their Lordships retired to discuss it apart ; and the consequence was, as a Peer wittily said, that the judges walked and the trial stood still.

It is to be added that, in the spring of 1788, when the trial commenced, no important question, either of domestic or foreign policy, occupied the public mind. The proceeding in

Westminster Hall, therefore, naturally attracted most of the attention of Parliament and of the country. It was the one great event of that season. But in the following year the King's illness, the debates on the Regency, the expectation of a change of ministry, completely diverted public attention from Indian affairs; and within a fortnight after George the Third had returned thanks at St. Paul's for his recovery, the States-General of France met at Versailles. In the midst of the agitation produced by these events, the impeachment was for a time almost forgotten.

The trial in the Hall went on languidly. In the session of 1788, when the proceedings had the interest of novelty, and when the Peers had little other business before them, only thirty-five days were given to the impeachment. In 1789, the Regency Bill occupied the Upper House till the session was far advanced. When the King recovered the circuits were beginning. The judges left town; the Lords waited for the return of the oracles of jurisprudence; and the consequence was that during the whole year only seventeen days were given to the case of Hastings. It was clear that the matter would be protracted to a length unprecedented in the annals of criminal law.

In truth, it is impossible to deny that impeachment, though it is a fine ceremony, and though it may have been useful in the seventeenth century, is not a proceeding from which much good can now be expected. Whatever confidence may be placed in the decision of the Peers on an appeal arising out of ordinary litigation it is certain that no man has the least confidence in their impartiality, when a great public functionary, charged with a great state crime, is brought to their bar. They are all politicians. There is hardly one among them whose vote on an impeachment may not be confidently predicted before a witness has been examined; and, even if it were possible to rely

on their justice, they would still be quite unfit to try such a cause as that of Hastings. They sit only during half the year. They have to transact much legislative and much judicial business. The law-lords, whose advice is required to guide the unlearned majority, are employed daily in administering justice elsewhere. It is impossible, therefore, that during a busy session, the Upper House should give more than a few days to an impeachment. To expect that their Lordships would give up partridge-shooting, in order to bring the greatest delinquent to speedy justice, or to relieve accused innocence by speedy acquittal, would be unreasonable indeed. A well constituted tribunal, sitting regularly six days in the week, and nine hours in the day, would have brought the trial of Hastings to a close in less than three months. The Lords had not finished their work in seven years.

The result ceased to be matter of doubt, from the time when the Lords resolved that they would be guided by the rules of evidence which are received in the inferior courts of the realm. Those rules, it is well known, exclude much information which would be quite sufficient to determine the conduct of any reasonable man, in the most important transactions of private life. These rules, at every assizes, save scores of culprits whom judges, jury, and spectators, firmly believe to be guilty. But when those rules were rigidly applied to offences committed many years before, at the distance of many thousands of miles, conviction was, of course, out of the question. We do not blame the accused and his counsel for availing themselves of every legal advantage in order to obtain an acquittal. But it is clear that an acquittal so obtained cannot be pleaded in bar of the judgment of history.

Several attempts were made by the friends of Hastings to put a stop to the trial. In 1789 they proposed a vote of censure upon Burke,

for some violent language which he had used respecting the death of Nuncomar and the connection between Hastings and Impey. Burke was then unpopular in the last degree both with the House and with the country. The asperity and indecency of some expressions which he had used during the debates on the Regency had annoyed even his warmest friends. The vote of censure was carried; and those who had moved it hoped that the managers would resign in disgust. Burke was deeply hurt. But his zeal for what he considered as the cause of justice and mercy triumphed over his personal feelings. He received the censure of the House with dignity and meekness, and declared that no personal mortification or humiliation should induce him to flinch from the sacred duty which he had undertaken.

In the following year the Parliament was dissolved; and the friends of Hastings entertained a hope that the new House of Commons might not be disposed to go on with the impeachment. They began by maintaining that the whole proceeding was terminated by the dissolution. Defeated on this point, they made a direct motion that the impeachment should be dropped; but they were defeated by the combined forces of the Government and the Opposition. It was, however, resolved that, for the sake of expedition, many of the articles should be withdrawn. In truth, had not some such measure been adopted, the trial would have lasted till the defendant was in his grave.

At length, in the spring of 1795, the decision was pronounced, near eight years after Hastings had been brought by the Serjeant-at-arms of the Commons to the bar of the Lords. On the last day of this great procedure the public curiosity, long suspended, seemed to be revived. Anxiety about the judgment there could be none; for it had been fully ascertained that there was a great majority for the defendant. Nevertheless many wished to see the pageant,

and the Hall was as much crowded as on the first day. But those who, having been present on the first day, now bore a part in the proceedings of the last, were few; and most of those few were altered men.

As Hastings himself said, the arraignment had taken place before one generation, and the judgment was pronounced by another. The spectator could not look at the woolsack, or at the red benches of the Peers, or at the green benches of the Commons, without seeing something that reminded him of the instability of all human things, of the instability of power and fame and life, of the more lamentable instability of friendship. The great seal was borne before Lord Loughborough, who, when the trial commenced, was a fierce opponent of Mr. Pitt's government, and who was now a member of that government, while Thurlow, who presided in the Court when it first sat, estranged from all his old allies, sat scowling among the junior barons. Of about a hundred and sixty nobles who walked in the procession on the first day, sixty had been laid in their family vaults. Still more affecting must have been the sight of the managers' box. What had become of that fair fellowship, so closely bound together by public and private ties, so resplendent with every talent and accomplishment? It had been scattered by calamities more bitter than the bitterness of death. The great chiefs were still living, and still in the full vigor of their genius. But their friendship was at an end. It had been violently and publicly dissolved, with tears and stormy reproaches. If those men, once so dear to each other, were now compelled to meet for the purpose of managing the impeachment, they met as strangers whom public business had brought together, and behaved to each other with cold and distant civility. Burke had in his vortex whirled away Windham. Fox had been followed by Sheridan and Grey.

Only twenty-nine Peers voted. Of these only six found Hastings guilty on the charges relating to Cheyte Sing and to the Begums. On other charges, the majority in his favor was still greater. On some he was unanimously absolved. He was then called to the bar, was informed from the woolsack that the Lords had acquitted him, and was solemnly discharged. He bowed respectfully and retired.

We have said that the decision had been fully expected. It was also generally approved. At the commencement of the trial there had been a strong and indeed unreasonable feeling against Hastings. At the close of the trial there was a feeling equally strong and equally unreasonable in his favor. One cause of the change was, no doubt, what is commonly called the fickleness of the multitude, but what seems to us to be merely the general law of human nature. Both in individuals and in masses violent excitement is always followed by remission and often by reaction. We are all inclined to depreciate whatever we have overpraised, and, on the other hand, to show undue indulgence where we have shown undue rigor. It was thus in the case of Hastings. The length of his trial, moreover, made him an object of compassion. It was thought, and not without reason, that, even if he was guilty, he was still an ill-used man, and that an impeachment of eight years was more than a sufficient punishment. It was also felt that, though, in the ordinary course of criminal law, a defendant is not allowed to set off his good actions against his crimes, a great political cause should be tried on different principles, and that a man who had governed an empire during thirteen years might have done some very reprehensible things, and yet might be on the whole deserving of rewards and honors rather than of fine and imprisonment. The press, an instrument neglected by the prosecutors, was used by Hastings and his friends with great effect. Every

ship, too, that arrived from Madras or Bengal, brought a cuddy full of his admirers. Every gentleman from India spoke of the late Governor-General as having deserved better, and having been treated worse, than any man living. The effect of this testimony unanimously given by all persons who knew the East was naturally very great. Retired members of the Indian services, civil and military, were settled in all corners of the kingdom. Each of them was, of course, in his own little circle, regarded as an oracle on an Indian question, and they were, with scarcely one exception, the zealous advocates of Hastings. It is to be added, that the numerous addresses to the late Governor-General, which his friends in Bengal obtained from the natives and transmitted to England, made a considerable impression. To these addresses we attach little or no importance. That Hastings was beloved by the people whom he governed is true; but the eulogies of pundits, zemindars, Mahommedan doctors, do not prove it to be true. For an English collector or judge would have found it easy to induce any native who could write to sign a panegyric on the most odious ruler that ever was in India. It was said that at Benares, the very place at which the acts set forth in the first article of impeachment had been committed, the natives had erected a temple to Hastings, and this story excited a strong sensation in England. Burke's observations on the apotheosis were admirable. He saw no reason for astonishment, he said, in the incident which had been represented as so striking. He knew something of the mythology of the Brahmins. He knew that as they worshipped some gods from love, so they worshipped others from fear. He knew that they erected shrines, not only to the benignant deities of light and plenty, but also the fiends who preside over small-pox and murder; nor did he at all dispute the claim of Mr. Hastings to be admitted

into such a Pantheon. This reply has always struck us as one of the finest that was ever made in Parliament. It is a grave and forcible argument, decorated by the most brilliant wit and fancy.

Hastings was, however, safe. But in everything except character, he would have been far better off if, when first impeached, he had at once pleaded guilty, and paid a fine of fifty thousand pounds. He was a ruined man. The legal expenses of his defence had been enormous. The expenses which did not appear in his attorney's bill were perhaps larger still. Great sums had been paid to Major Scott. Great sums had been laid out in bribing newspapers, rewarding pamphleteers, and circulating tracts. Burke, so early as 1790, declared in the House of Commons that twenty thousand pounds had been employed in corrupting the press. It is certain that no controversial weapon, from the gravest reason to the coarsest ribaldry, was left unemployed. Logan defended the accused Governor with great ability in prose. For the lovers of verse, the speeches of the managers were burlesqued in Simpkin's letters. It is, we are afraid, indisputable that Hastings stooped so low as to court the aid of that malignant and filthy baboon John Williams, who called himself Anthony Pasquin. It was necessary to subsidize such allies largely. The private hoards of Mrs. Hastings had disappeared. It is said that the banker to whom they had been intrusted had failed. Still if Hastings had practised strict economy, he would, after all his losses, have had a moderate competence; but in the management of his private affairs he was imprudent. The dearest wish of his heart had always been to regain Daylesford. At length, in the very year in which his trial commenced, the wish was accomplished; and the domain, alienated more than seventy years before, returned to the descendant of its old lords. But the manor

house was a ruin ; and the grounds around it had, during many years, been utterly neglected. Hastings proceeded to build, to plant, to form a sheet of water, to excavate a grotto ; and, before he was dismissed from the bar of the House of Lords, he had expended more than forty thousand pounds in adorning his seat.

The general feeling both of the Directors and of the proprietors of the East India Company was that he had great claims on them, that his services to them had been eminent, and that his misfortunes had been the effect of his zeal for their interest. His friends in Leadenhall Street proposed to reimburse him the costs of his trial, and to settle on him an annuity of five thousand pounds a year. But the consent of the Board of Control was necessary ; and at the head of the Board of Control was Mr. Dundas, who had himself been a party to the impeachment, who had, on that account, been reviled with great bitterness by the adherents of Hastings, and who, therefore, was not in a very complying mood. He refused to consent to what the Directors suggested. The Directors remonstrated. A long controversy followed. Hastings, in the meantime, was reduced to such distress, that he could hardly pay his weekly bills. At length a compromise was made. An annuity for life of four thousand pounds was settled on Hastings ; and in order to enable him to meet pressing demands, he was to receive ten years' annuity in advance. The Company was also permitted to lend him fifty thousand pounds, to be repaid by instalments without interest. The relief, though given in the most absurd manner, was sufficient to enable the retired Governor to live in comfort, and even in luxury, if he had been a skilful manager. But he was careless and profuse, and was more than once under the necessity of applying to the Company for assistance, which was liberally given.

He had security and affluence, but not the power and dignity which, when he landed from India, he had reason to expect. He had then looked forward to a coronet, a red ribbon, a seat at the Council Board, an office at Whitehall. He was then only fifty-two, and might hope for many years of bodily and mental vigor. The case was widely different when he left the bar of the Lords. He was now too old a man to turn his mind to a new class of studies and duties. He had no chance of receiving any mark of royal favor while Mr. Pitt remained in power; and, when Mr. Pitt retired, Hastings was approaching his seventieth year.

Once, and only once, after his acquittal, he interfered in politics; and that interference was not much to his honor. In 1804 he exerted himself strenuously to prevent Mr. Addington, against whom Fox and Pitt had combined, from resigning the Treasury. It is difficult to believe that a man so able and energetic as Hastings can have thought that, when Bonaparte was at Boulogne with a great army the defence of our island could safely be intrusted to a ministry which did not contain a single person whom flattery could describe as a great statesman. It is also certain that, on the important question which had raised Mr. Addington to power, and on which he differed from both Fox and Pitt, Hastings, as might have been expected, agreed with Fox and Pitt, and was decidedly opposed to Addington. Religious intolerance has never been the vice of the Indian service, and certainly was not the vice of Hastings. But Mr. Addington had treated him with marked favor. Fox had been a principal manager of the impeachment. To Pitt it was owing that there had been an impeachment; and Hastings, we fear, was on this occasion guided by personal considerations, rather than by a regard to the public interest.

The last twenty-four years of his life were

chiefly passed at Daylesford. He amused himself with embellishing his grounds, riding fine Arab horses, fattening prize cattle, and trying to rear Indian animals and vegetables in England. He sent for seeds of a very fine custard apple, from the garden of what had once been his own villa, among the green hedgerows of Allipore. He tried also to neutralize in Worcestershire the delicious leeches, almost the only fruit of Bengal which deserves to be regretted even amidst the plenty of Covent Garden. The Mogul emperors, in the time of their greatness had in vain attempted to introduce into Hindostan the goat of the table-land of Thibet, whose down supplies the looms of Cashmere with the materials of the finest shawls. Hastings tried with no better fortune, to rear a breed at Daylesford ; nor does he seem to have succeeded better with the cattle of Bootan, whose tails are in high esteem as the best fans for brushing away the musquitoes.

Literature divided his attention with his conservatories and his menagerie. He had always loved books, and they were now necessary to him. Though not a poet, in any high sense of the word, he wrote neat and polished lines with great facility, and was fond of exercising this talent. Indeed, if we must speak out, he seems to have been more of a Trissotin than was to be expected from the powers of his mind, and from the great part which he had played in life. We are assured in these Memoirs that the first thing which he did in the morning was to write a copy of verses. When the family and guests assembled, the poem made its appearance as regularly as the eggs and rolls ; and Mr. Gleig requires us to believe that, if from any accident Hastings came to the breakfast-table without one of his charming performances in his hand, the omission was felt by all as a grievous disappointment. Tastes differ widely. For ourselves, we must say that, however good the breakfasts at Daylesford may have been,—and

we are assured that the tea was of the most aromatic flavor, and that neither tongue nor venison-pasty was wanting,—we should have thought the reckoning high if we had been forced to earn our repast by listening every day to a new madrigal or sonnet composed by our host. We are glad, however, that Mr. Gleig has preserved this little feature of character, though we think it by no means a beauty. It is good to be often reminded of the inconsistency of human nature, and to learn to look without wonder or disgust on the weaknesses which are found in the strongest minds. Dionysius in old times, Frederic in the last century, with capacity and vigor equal to the conduct of the greatest affairs, united all the little vanities and affectations of provincial blue-stockings. These great examples may console the admirers of Hastings for the affliction of seeing him reduced to the level of the Hayleys and Swards.

When Hastings had passed many years in retirement, and had long outlived the common age of men, he again became for a short time an object of general attention. In 1813 the charter of the East India Company was renewed; and much discussion about Indian affairs took place in Parliament. It was determined to examine witnesses at the bar of the Commons; and Hastings was ordered to attend. He had appeared at that bar once before. It was when he read his answer to charges which Burke had laid on the table. Since that time twenty-seven years had elapsed; public feeling had undergone a complete change; the nation had now forgotten his faults, and remembered only his services. The reappearance, too, of a man who had been among the most distinguished of a generation that had passed away, and now belonged to history, and who seemed to have risen from the dead, could not but produce a solemn and pathetic effect. The Commons received

him with acclamations, ordered a chair to be set for him, and, when he retired, rose and uncovered. There were, indeed, a few who did not sympathize with the general feeling. One or two of the managers of the impeachment were present. They sate in the same seats which they had occupied when they had been thanked for the services which they had rendered in Westminster Hall: for, by the courtesy of the House, a member who has been thanked in his place is considered as having a right always to occupy that place. These gentlemen were not disposed to admit that they had employed several of the best years of their lives in persecuting an innocent man. They accordingly kept their seats, and pulled their hats over their brows; but the exceptions only made the prevailing enthusiasm more remarkable. The Lords received the old man with similar tokens of respect. The University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of Doctor of Laws; and, in the Sheldonian Theatre, the undergraduates welcomed him with tumultuous cheering.

These marks of public esteem were soon followed by marks of royal favor. Hastings was sworn of the Privy Council, and was admitted to a long private audience of the Prince Regent, who treated him very graciously. When the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia visited England, Hastings appeared in their train both at Oxford and in the Guildhall of London, and, though surrounded by a crowd of princes and great warriors, was everywhere received with marks of respect and admiration. He was presented by the Prince Regent both to Alexander and to Frederic William; and his Royal Highness went so far as to declare in public that honors far higher than a seat in the Privy Council were due, and would soon be paid, to the man who had saved the British dominions in Asia. Hastings now confidently expected a peerage; but,

from some unexplained cause, he was again disappointed.

He lived about four years longer, in the enjoyment of good spirits, of faculties not impaired to any painful or degrading extent, and of health such as is rarely enjoyed by those who attain such an age. At length, on the twenty-second of August, 1818, in the eighty-sixth year of his age, he met death with the same tranquil and decorous fortitude which he had opposed to all the trials of his various and eventful life.

With all his faults,—and they were neither few nor small,—only one cemetery was worthy to contain his remains. In that temple of silence and reconciliation where the enmities of twenty generations lie buried, in the Great Abbey which has during many ages afforded a quiet resting-place to those whose minds and bodies have been shattered by the contentions of the Great Hall, the dust of the illustrious accused should have mingled with the dust of the illustrious accusers. This was not to be. Yet the place of interment was not ill-chosen. Behind the chancel of the parish church of Daylesford, in earth which already held the bones of many chiefs of the house of Hastings, was laid the coffin of the greatest man who has ever borne that ancient and widely extended name. On that very spot, probably, fourscore years before, the little Warren, meanly clad and scantily fed, and played with the children of ploughmen. Even then his young mind had revolved plans which might be called romantic. Yet, however romantic, it is not likely that they had been so strange as the truth. Not only had the poor orphan retrieved the fallen fortunes of his line. Not only had he repurchased the old lands, and rebuilt the old dwelling. He had preserved and extended an empire. He had founded a polity. He had administered government and war with more than the capacity of Richelieu.

He had patronized learning with the judicious liberality of Cosmo. He had been attacked by the most formidable combination of enemies that ever sought the destruction of a single victim; and over that combination, after a struggle of ten years, he had triumphed. He had at length gone down to his grave in the fulness of age, in peace, after so many troubles, in honor, after so much obloquy.

Those who look on his character without favor or malevolence will pronounce that, in the two great elements of all social virtue, in respect for the rights of others, and in sympathy for the sufferings of others, he was deficient. His principals were somewhat lax. His heart was somewhat hard. But though we cannot with truth describe him either as a righteous or as a merciful ruler, we cannot regard without admiration the amplitude and fertility of his intellect, his rare talents for command, for administration, and for controversy, his dauntless courage, his honorable poverty, his fervent zeal for the interests of the state, his noble equanimity, tried by both extremes of fortune, and never disturbed by either.

WILLIAM PITT.

(*Encyclopædia Britannica*, January, 1859.)

WILLIAM PITT, the second son of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, and of Lady Hester Grenville, daughter of Hester, Countess Temple, was born on the 28th of May, 1759. The child inherited a name which, at the time of his birth, was the most illustrious in the civilized world, and was pronounced by every Englishman with pride, and by every enemy of England with mingled admiration and terror. During the first year of his life, every month had its illuminations and bonfires, and every wind brought some messenger charged with joyful tidings and hostile standards. In Westphalia the English infantry won a great battle which arrested the armies of Louis the Fifteenth in the midst of a career of conquest; Boscawen defeated one French fleet on the coast of Portugal; Hawke put to flight another in the Bay of Biscay; Johnson took Niagara; Amherst took Ticonderoga; Wolfe died by the most enviable of deaths under the walls of Quebec; Clive destroyed a Dutch armament in the Hooghly, and established the English supremacy in Bengal; Coote routed Lally at Wandewash, and established the English supremacy in the Carnatic. The nation, while loudly applauding the successful warriors, considered them all, on sea and on land, in Europe, in America, and in Asia, merely as instruments which received their direction from one superior mind. It was

the great William Pitt, the great commoner, who had vanquished French marshals in Germany, and French admirals on the Atlantic; who had conquered for his country one great empire on the frozen shores of Ontario, and another under the tropical sun near the mouths of the Ganges. It was not in the nature of things that popularity such as he at this time enjoyed should be permanent. That popularity had lost its gloss before his children were old enough to understand that their father was a great man. He was at length placed in situations in which neither his talents for administration nor his talents for debate appeared to the best advantage. The energy and decision which had eminently fitted him for the direction of war were not needed in time of peace. The lofty and spirit-stirring eloquence which had made him supreme in the House of Commons often fell dead on the House of Lords. A cruel malady racked his joints, and left his joints only to fall on his nerves and on his brain. During the closing years of his life, he was odious to the court, and yet was not on cordial terms with the great body of the Opposition. Chatham was only the ruin of Pitt, but an awful and majestic ruin, not to be contemplated by any man of sense and feeling without emotions resembling those which are excited by the remains of the Parthenon and of the Coliseum. In one respect the old statesman was eminently happy. Whatever might be the vicissitudes of his public life, he never failed to find peace and love by his own hearth. He loved all his children, and was loved by them; and, of all his children, the one of whom he was fondest and proudest was his second son.

The child's genius and ambition displayed themselves with a rare and almost unnatural precocity. At seven, the interest which he took in grave subjects, the ardor with which he pursued his studies, and the sense and vivacity of his remarks on books and on events,

amazed his parents and instructors. One of his sayings of this date was reported to his mother by his tutor. In August, 1766, when the world was agitated by the news that Mr. Pitt had become Earl of Chatham, little William exclaimed: "I am glad that I am not the eldest son. I want to speak in the House of Commons like papa." A letter is extant in which Lady Chatham, a woman of considerable abilities, remarked to her lord, that their younger son at twelve had left far behind him his elder brother, who was fifteen. "The fineness," she wrote, "of William's mind makes him enjoy with the greatest pleasure what would be above the reach of any other creature of his small age." At fourteen the lad was in intellect a man. Hayley, who met him at Lyme in the summer of 1773, was astonished, delighted, and somewhat overawed, by hearing wit and wisdom from so young a mouth. The poet, indeed, was afterwards sorry that his shyness had prevented him from submitting the plan of an extensive literary work, which he was then meditating, to the judgment of this extraordinary boy. The boy, indeed, had already written a tragedy, bad of course, but not worse than the tragedies of his friend. This piece is still preserved at Chevening, and is in some respects highly curious. There is no love. The whole plot is political; and it is remarkable that the interest, such as it is, turns on a contest about a regency. On one side is a faithful servant of the Crown, on the other an ambitious and unprincipled conspirator. At length the King, who had been missing, reappears, resumes his power, and rewards the faithful defender of his rights. A reader who should judge only by internal evidence would have no hesitation in pronouncing that the play was written by some Pittite poetaster at the time of the rejoicings for the recovery of George the Third in 1789.

The pleasure with which William's parents

observed the rapid development of his intellectual powers was alloyed by apprehensions about his health. He shot up alarmingly fast; he was often ill, and always weak; it was feared that it would be impossible to rear a stripling so tall, so slender, and so feeble. Port wine was prescribed by his medical advisers: and it is said that he was, at fourteen, accustomed to take this agreeable physic in quantities which would, in our abstemious age, be thought much more than sufficient for any full-grown man. This regimen, though it would probably have killed ninety-nine boys out of a hundred, seems to have been well fitted to the peculiarities of William's constitution; for at fifteen he ceased to be molested by disease, and, though never a strong man, continued, during many years of labor and anxiety, of nights passed in debate and of summers passed in London, to be a tolerably healthy one. It was probably on account of the delicacy of his frame that he was not educated like other boys of the same rank. Almost all the eminent English statesmen and orators to whom he was afterwards opposed or allied, North, Fox, Shelburne, Windham, Grey, Wellesley, Grenville, Sheridan, Canning, went through the training of great public schools. Lord Chatham had himself been a distinguished Etonian; and it is seldom that a distinguished Etonian forgets his obligations to Eton. But William's infirmities required a vigilance and tenderness such as could be found only at home. He was therefore bred under the paternal roof. His studies were superintended by a clergyman named Wilson; and those studies, though often interrupted by illness, were prosecuted with extraordinary success. Before the lad had completed his fifteenth year, his knowledge both of the ancient languages and of mathematics was such as very few men of eighteen then carried up to college. He was therefore sent, towards the

close of the year 1773, to Pembroke Hall, in the University of Cambridge. So young a student required much more than the ordinary care which a college tutor bestows on undergraduates. The governor, to whom the direction of William's academical life was confided, was a bachelor of arts named Pretymán, who had been senior wrangler in the preceding year, and who, though not a man of prepossessing appearance or brilliant parts, was eminently acute and laborious, a sound scholar, and an excellent geometrician. At Cambridge Pretymán was, during more than two years, the inseparable companion, and indeed almost the only companion, of his pupil. A close and lasting friendship sprang up between the pair. The disciple was able, before he completed his twenty-eighth year, to make his preceptor Bishop of Lincoln and Dean of St. Paul's; and the preceptor showed his gratitude by writing a life of the disciple, which enjoys the distinction of being the worst biographical work of its size in the world.

Pitt, till he graduated, had scarcely one acquaintance, attended chapel regularly morning and evening, dined every day in hall, and never went to a single evening party. At seventeen, he was admitted, after the bad fashion of those times, by right of birth, without any examination, to the degree of Master of Arts. But he continued during some years to reside at college, and to apply himself vigorously, under Pretymán's direction, to the studies of the place, while mixing freely in the best academic society.

The stock of learning which Pitt laid in during this part of his life was certainly very extraordinary. In fact, it was all that he ever possessed; for he very early became too busy to have any spare time for books. The work in which he took the greatest delight was Newton's Principia. His liking for mathematics, indeed, amounted to a passion, which, in the

opinion of his instructors, themselves distinguished mathematicians, required to be checked rather than encouraged. The acuteness and readiness with which he solved problems was pronounced by one of the ablest of the moderators, who in those days presided over the disputations in the schools, and conducted examinations of the Senate House, to be unrivalled in the University: Nor was the youth's proficiency in classical learning less remarkable. In one respect, indeed, he appeared to disadvantage when compared with even second-rate and third-rate men from public schools. He had never, while under Wilson's care, been in the habit of composing in the ancient languages; and he therefore never acquired that knack of versification which is sometimes possessed by clever boys, whose knowledge of the language and literature of Greece and Rome is very superficial. It would have been utterly out of his power to produce such charming elegiac lines as those in which Wellesley bade farewell to Eton, or such Virgilian hexameters as those in which Canning described the pilgrimage to Mecca. But it may be doubted whether any scholar has ever, at twenty, had a more solid and profound knowledge of the two great tongues of the old civilized world. The facility with which he penetrated the meaning of the most intricate sentences in the Attic writers astonished veteran critics. He had set his heart on being intimately acquainted with all the extant poetry of Greece, and was not satisfied till he had mastered Lycophron's *Cassandra*, the most obscure work in the whole range of ancient literature. This strange rhapsody, the difficulties of which have perplexed and repelled many excellent scholars, "he read," says his perceptor, "with an ease at first sight, which, if I had not witnessed it, I should have thought beyond the compass of human intellect."

To modern literature Pitt paid comparatively

little attention. He knew no living language except French; and French he knew very imperfectly. With a few of the best English writers he was intimate, particularly with Shakspeare and Milton. The debate in *Pandemonium*, was, as it well deserved to be, one of his favorite passages; and his early friends used to talk, long after his death, of the just emphasis and the melodious cadence with which they had heard him recite the incomparable speech of Belial. He had indeed been carefully trained from infancy in the art of managing his voice, a voice naturally clear and deep-toned. His father, whose oratory owed no small part of its effect to that art, had been a most skilful and judicious instructor. At a later period, the wits of Brookes's, irritated by observing, night after night, how powerfully Pitt's sonorous elocution fascinated the rows of country gentlemen, reproached him with having been "taught by his dad on a stool."

His education, indeed, was well adapted to form a great parliamentary speaker. One argument often urged against those classical studies which occupy so large a part of the early life of every gentleman bred in the south of our island is, that they prevent him from acquiring a command of his mother tongue, and that it is not unusual to meet with a youth of excellent parts, who writes Ciceronian Latin prose and Horatian Latin *Alcaics*, but who would find it impossible to express his thoughts in pure, perspicuous, and forcible English. There may perhaps be some truth in this observation. But the classical studies of Pitt were carried on in a peculiar manner, and had the effect of enriching his English vocabulary, and of making him wonderfully expert in the art of constructing correct English sentences. His practice was to look over a page or two of a Greek or Latin author, to make himself master of the meaning, and then to read the passage straight-forward into his own language.

This practice, begun under his first teacher Wilson, was continued under Pretymann. It is not strange that a young man of great abilities who had been exercised daily in this way during ten years, should have acquired an almost unrivalled power of putting his thoughts, without premeditation, into words well selected and well arranged.

Of all the remains of antiquity, the orations were those on which he bestowed the most minute examination. His favorite employment was to compare harangues on opposite sides of the same question, to analyze them, and to observe which of the arguments of the first speaker were refuted by the second, which were evaded, and which were left untouched. Nor was it only in books that he at this time studied the art of parliamentary fencing. When he was at home, he had frequent opportunities of hearing important debates at Westminster; and he heard them, not only with interest and enjoyment, but with a close scientific attention resembling that with which a diligent pupil at Guy's Hospital watches every turn of the hand of a great surgeon through a difficult operation. On one of these occasions, Pitt, a youth whose abilities were as yet known only to his own family and to a small knot of college friends, was introduced on the steps of the throne in the House of Lords to Fox, who was his senior by eleven years, and who was already the greatest debater, and one of the greatest orators, that had appeared in England. Fox used afterwards to relate that, as the discussion proceeded, Pitt repeatedly turned to him and said, "But surely, Mr. Fox, that might be met thus;" or, "Yes; but he lays himself open to this retort." What the particular criticisms were Fox had forgotten; but he said that he was much struck at the time by the precocity of a lad who through the whole sitting, seemed to be thinking only how all the speeches on both sides could be answered.

One of the young man's visits to the House of Lords was a sad memorable era in his life. He had not quite completed his nineteenth year, when, on the 7th of April, 1778, he attended his father to Westminster. A great debate was expected. It was known that France had recognized the independence of the United States. The Duke of Richmond was about to declare his opinion that all thought of subjugating those states ought to be relinquished. Chatham had always maintained that the resistance of the colonies to the mother country was justifiable. But he conceived, very erroneously, that on the day on which their independence should be acknowledged the greatness of England would be at an end. Though sinking under the weight of years and infirmities, he determined, in spite of the entreaties of his family, to be in his place. His son supported him to a seat. The excitement and exertion were too much for the old man. In the very act of addressing the peers, he fell back in convulsions. A few weeks later his corpse was borne, with gloomy pomp from the Painted Chamber to the Abbey. The favorite child and namesake of the deceased statesman followed the coffin as chief mourner, and saw it deposited in the transept where his own was destined to lie.

His elder brother, now Earl of Chatham, had means sufficient, and barely sufficient, to support the dignity of the peerage. The other members of the family were poorly provided for. William had little more than three hundred a year. It was necessary for him to follow a profession. He had already begun to eat his terms. In the spring of 1780 he came of age. He then quitted Cambridge, was called to the bar, took chambers in Lincoln's Inn, and joined the western circuit. In the autumn of that year a general election took place; and he offered himself as a candidate for the university; but he was at the bottom,

of the poll. It is said that the grave doctors who then sate, robed in scarlet, on the benches of Golgotha, thought it great presumption in so young a man to solicit so high a distinction. He was, however, at the request of a hereditary friend, the Duke of Rutland, brought into Parliament by Sir James Lowther for the borough of Appleby.

The dangers of the country were at that time such as might well have disturbed even a constant mind. Army after army had been sent in vain against the rebellious colonists of North America. On pitched fields of battle the advantage had been with the disciplined troops of the mother country. But it was not on pitched fields of battle that the event of such a contest could be decided. An armed nation, with hunger and the Atlantic for auxiliaries, was not to be subjugated. Meanwhile the House of Bourbon, humbled to the dust a few years before by the genius and vigor of Chat-ham, had seized the opportunity of revenge. France and Spain were united against us, and had recently been joined by Holland. The command of the Mediterranean had been for a time lost. The British flag had been scarcely able to maintain itself in the British Channel. The northern powers professed neutrality; but their neutrality had a menacing aspect. In the East, Hyder had descended on the Carnatic had destroyed the little army of Baillie, and had spread terror even to the the ramparts of Fort St. George. The discontents of Ireland threatened nothing less than civil war. In England the authority of the government had sunk to the lowest point. The King and the House of Commons were alike unpopular. The cry for parliamentary reform was scarcely less loud and vehement than in the autumn of 1830. Formidable associations, headed, not by ordinary demagogues, but by men of high rank, stainless character, and distinguished ability, demanded a revision of the representative

system. The populace, emboldened by the impotence and irresolution of the government, had recently broken loose from all restraint, besieged the chambers of the legislature, hustled peers, hunted bishops, attacked the residences of ambassadors, opened prisons, burned and pulled down houses. London had presented during some days the aspect of a city taken by storm and it had been necessary to form a camp among the trees of Saint James's Park.

In spite of dangers and difficulties abroad and at home, George the Third, with a firmness which had little affinity with virtue or with wisdom, persisted in his determination to put down the American rebels by force of arms; and his ministers submitted their judgment to his. Some of them were probably actuated merely by selfish cupidity; but their chief, Lord North, a man of high honor, amiable temper, winning manners, lively wit, and excellent talents both for business and for debate, must be acquitted of all sordid motives. He remained at a post from which he had long wished and had repeatedly tried to escape, only because he had not sufficient fortitude to resist the entreaties and reproaches of the King, who silenced all arguments by passionately asking whether any gentleman, any man of spirit, could have the heart to desert kind master in the hour of extremity.

The opposition consisted of two parties which had once been hostile to each other, and which had been very slowly, and, as it soon appeared, very imperfectly reconciled, but which at this conjuncture seemed to act together with cordiality. The larger of these parties consisted of the great body of the Whig aristocracy. Its head was Charles, Marquis of Rockingham, a man of sense and virtue, and in wealth and parliamentary interest equalled by very few of the English nobles, but afflicted with a nervous ~~irritability~~ which prevented him from taking a

prominent part in debate. In the House of Commons, the adherents of Rockingham were led by Fox, whose dissipated habits and ruined fortunes were the talk of the whole town, but whose commanding genius, and whose sweet, generous, and affectionate disposition, extorted the admiration and love of those who most lamented the errors of his private life. Burke, superior to Fox in largeness of comprehension, in extent of knowledge, and splendor of imagination, but less skilled in that kind of logic and in that kind of rhetoric which convince and persuade great assemblies, was willing to be the lieutenant of a young chief who might have been his son.

A smaller section of the opposition was composed of the old followers of Chatham. At their head was William, Earl of Shelburne, distinguished both as a statesman and as a lover of science and letters. With him were leagued Lord Camden, who had formerly held the Great Seal, and whose integrity, ability, and constitutional knowledge commanded the public respect ; Barré, an eloquent and acrimonious declaimer ; and Dunning, who had long held the first place at the English Bar. It was to this party that Pitt was naturally attracted.

On the 26th of February, 1781, he made his first speech, in favor of Burke's plan of economical reform. Fox stood up at the same moment, but instantly gave away. The lofty yet animated deportment of the young member, his perfect self-possession, the readiness with which he replied to the orators who had preceded him, the silver tones of his voice, the perfect structure of his unpremeditated sentences, astonished and delighted his hearers, Burke, moved even to tears, exclaimed, "It is not a chip of the old block ; it is the old block itself." "Pitt will be one of the first men in Parliament," said a member of the opposition to Fox. "He is so already," an-

swered Fox, in whose nature envy had no place. It is a curious fact, well remembered by some who were very recently living, that soon after this debate Pitt's name was put up by Fox at Brookes's

On two subsequent occasions during that session Pitt addressed the House, and on both fully sustained the reputation which he had acquired on his first appearance. In the summer, after the prorogation, he again went the western circuit, held several briefs, and acquitted himself in such a manner that he was highly complimented by Buller from the bench, and by Dunning at the bar.

On the 27th of November the Parliament reassembled. Only forty-eight hours before had arrived tidings of the surrender of Cornwallis and his army; and it had consequently been necessary to rewrite the royal speech. Every man in the kingdom, except the King, was now convinced that it was mere madness to think of conquering the United States. In the debate on the report of the address, Pitt spoke with even more energy and brilliancy than on any former occasion. He was warmly applauded by his allies; but it was remarked that no person on his own side of the house was so loud in eulogy as Henry Dundas, the Lord Advocate of Scotland, who spoke from the ministerial ranks. That able and versatile politician distinctly foresaw the approaching downfall of the government with which he was connected, and was preparing to make his own escape from the ruin. From that night dates his connection with Pitt, a connection which soon became a close intimacy, and which lasted till it was dissolved by death.

About a fortnight later, Pitt spoke in the committee of supply on the army estimates. Symptoms of dissension had begun to appear on the Treasury bench. Lord George Germaine, the Secretary of State who was especially charged with the direction of the war in

America, had held language not easily to be reconciled with declarations made by the First Lord of the Treasury. Pitt noticed the discrepancy with much force and keenness. Lord George and Lord North began to whisper together : and Welbore Ellis, an ancient place-man who had been drawing salary almost every quarter since the days of Henry Pelham, bent down between them to put in a word. Such interruptions sometimes discompose veteran speakers. Pitt stopped, and, looking at the group, said, with admirable readiness, "I shall wait till Nestor has composed the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles."

After several defeats, or victories hardly to be distinguished from defeats, the ministry resigned. The King, reluctantly and ungraciously consented to accept Rockingham as first minister. Fox and Shelburne became Secretaries of State. Lord John Cavendish, one of the most upright and honorable of men, was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thurlow, whose abilities and force of character had made him the dictator of the House of Lords, continued to hold the great seal.

To Pitt was offered, through Shelburne, the Vice-Treasurership of Ireland, one of the easiest and most highly paid places in the gift of the Crown ; but the offer was, without hesitation, declined. The young statesman had resolved to accept no post which did not entitle him to a seat in the cabinet : and, a few days later he announced that resolution in the House of Commons. It must be remembered that the cabinet was then a much smaller and more select body than at present. We have seen cabinets of sixteen. In the time of our grandfathers a cabinet of ten or eleven was thought inconveniently large. Seven was an usual number. Even Burke, who had taken the lucrative office of paymaster, was not in the cabinet. Many therefore thought Pitt's declaration indecent. He himself was sorry

that he had made it. The words, he said in private, had escaped him in the heat of speaking ; and he had no sooner uttered them than he would have given the world to recall them. They, however, did him no harm with the public. The second William Pitt, it was said, had shown that he had inherited the spirit, as well as the genius, of the first. In the son, as in the father, there might perhaps be too much pride ; but there was nothing low or sordid. It might be called arrogance in a young barrister, living in chambers on three hundred a year, to refuse a salary of five thousand a year, merely because he did not choose to bind himself to speak or vote for plans which he had no share in framing ; but surely such arrogance was not very far removed from virtue.

Pitt gave a general support to the administration of Rockingham, but omitted, in the mean time, no opportunity of courting that Ultra-Whig party which the persecution of Wilkes and the Middlesex election had called into existence, and which the disastrous events of the war, and the triumph of republican principles in America, had made formidable both in numbers and in temper. He supported a motion for shortening the duration of Parliaments. He made a motion for a committee to examine into the state of the representation, and, in the speech by which that motion was introduced, avowed himself the enemy of the close boroughs, the strongholds of that corruption to which he attributed all the calamities of the nation, and which, as he phrased it in one of those exact and sonorous sentences of which he had a boundless command, had grown with the growth of England and strengthened with her strength, but had not diminished with her diminution or decayed with her decay. On this occasion he was supported by Fox. The motion was lost by only twenty votes in a house of more than three hundred members.

The reformers never again had so good a division till the year 1831.

The new administration was strong in abilities, and was more popular than any administration which had held office since the first year of George the Third, but was hated by the King, hesitatingly supported by the Parliament, and torn by internal dissensions. The Chancellor was disliked and distrusted by almost all his colleagues. The two Secretaries of State regarded each other with no friendly feeling. The line between their departments had not been traced with precision; and there were consequently jealousies, encroachments and complaints. It was all that Rockingham could do to keep the peace in his cabinet; and before the cabinet had existed three months, Rockingham died.

In an instant all was confusion. The adherents of the deceased statesman looked on the Duke of Portland as their chief. The King placed Shelburne at the head of the Treasury. Fox, Lord John Cavendish, and Burke, immediately resigned their offices; and the new prime minister was left to constitute a government out of very defective materials. His own parliamentary talents were great; but he could not be in the place where parliamentary talents were most needed. It was necessary to find some member of the House of Commons who could confront the great orators of the opposition; and Pitt alone had the eloquence and the courage which were required. He was offered the great place of Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he accepted it. He had scarcely completed his twenty-third year.

The Parliament was speedily prorogued. During the recess, a negotiation for peace which had been commenced under Rockingham was brought to a successful termination. England acknowledged the independence of her revolted colonies; and she ceded to her

European enemies some places in the Mediterranean and in the Gulf of Mexico. But the terms which she obtained were quite as advantageous and honorable as the events of the war entitled her to expect, or as she was likely to obtain by persevering in a contest against immense odds. All her vital parts, all the real sources of her power, remained uninjured. She preserved even her dignity; for she ceded to the House of Bourbon only part of what she had won from that House in previous wars. She retained her Indian empire undiminished; and, in spite of the mightiest efforts of two great monarchies, her flag still waved on the rock of Gibraltar. There is not the slightest reason to believe that Fox, if he had remained in office, would have hesitated one moment about concluding a treaty on such conditions. Unhappily that great and most amiable man was, at this crisis, hurried by his passions into an error which made his genius and his virtues, during a long course of years, almost useless to his country.

He saw that the great body of the House of Commons was divided into three parties, his own, that of North, and that of Shelburne; that none of those three parties was large enough to stand alone; that, therefore, unless two of them united, there must be a miserably feeble administration, or, more probably, a rapid succession of miserably feeble administrations, and this at a time when a strong government was essential to the prosperity and respectability of the nation. It was then necessary and right that there should be a coalition. To every possible coalition there were objections. But, of all possible coalitions, that to which there were the fewest objections was undoubtedly a coalition between Shelburne and Fox. It would have been generally applauded by the followers of both. It might have been made without any sacrifice of public principle on the part of either. Unhappily, recent bickerings

had left in the mind of Fox a profound dislike and distrust of Shelburne. Pitt attempted to mediate, and was authorized to invite Fox to return to the service of the Crown. "Is Lord Shelburne," said Fox, "to remain prime minister?" Pitt answered in the affirmative. "It is impossible that I can act under him," said Fox. "Then negotiation is at an end," said Pitt; "for I cannot betray him." Thus the two statesmen parted. They were never again in a private room together.

As Fox and his friends would not treat with Shelburne, nothing remained to them but to treat with North. That fatal coalition which is emphatically called "The Coalition" was formed. Not three-quarters of a year had elapsed since Fox and Burke had threatened North with impeachment, and had described him, night after night, as the most arbitrary, the most corrupt, the most incapable of ministers. They now allied themselves with him for the purpose of driving from office a statesman with whom they cannot be said to have differed as to any important question. Nor had they even the prudence and the patience to wait for some occasion on which they might, without inconsistency, have combined with their old enemies in opposition to the government. That nothing might be wanting to the scandal, the great orators, who had, during seven years, thundered against the war, determined to join with the authors of that war in passing a vote of censure on the peace.

The Parliament met before Christmas, 1782, But it was not till January, 1783, that the preliminary treaties were signed. On the 17th of February they were taken into consideration by the House of Commons. There had been, during some days, floating rumors that Fox and North had coalesced; and the debate indicated but too clearly that these rumors were not unfounded. Pitt was suffering from indisposition; he did not rise till his own strength

and that of his hearers were exhausted ; and he was consequently less successful than on any former occasion. His admirers owned that his speech was feeble and petulant. He so far forgot himself as to advise Sheridan to confine himself to amusing theatrical audiences. This ignoble sarcasm gave Sheridan an opportunity of retorting with great felicity. " After what I have seen and heard to-night," he said, " I really feel strongly tempted to venture on a competition with so great an artist as Ben Jonson, and to bring on the stage a second Angry Boy." On a division, the address proposed by the supporters of the government was rejected by a majority of sixteen.

But Pitt was not a man to be disheartened by a single failure, or to be put down by the most lively repartee. When, a few days later, the opposition proposed a resolution directly censuring the treaties, he spoke with an eloquence, energy, and dignity, which raised his fame and popularity higher than ever. To the coalition of Fox and North he alluded in language which drew forth tumultuous applause from his followers. " If," he said, " this ill-omened and unnatural marriage be not yet consummated, I know of a just and lawful impediment ; and, in the name of the public weal, I forbid the banns."

The ministers were again left in a minority ; and Shelburne consequently tendered his resignation. It was accepted ; but the King struggled long and hard before he submitted to the terms dictated by Fox, whose faults he detested, and whose high spirit and powerful intellect he detested still more. The first place at the board of Treasury was repeatedly offered to Pitt ; but the offer, though tempting, was steadfastly declined. The young man, whose judgment was as precocious as his eloquence, saw that his time was coming, but was not come, was deaf to royal importunities and reproaches. His Majesty, bitterly complaining

of Pitt's faintheartedness, tried to break the coalition. Every art of seduction was practised on North, but in vain. During several weeks the country remained without a government. It was not till all devices had failed, and till the aspect of the House of Commons became threatening, that the King gave way. The Duke of Portland was declared First Lord of the Treasury. Thurlow was dismissed. Fox and North became Secretaries of State with power ostensibly equal. But Fox was the real prime minister.

The year was far advanced before the new arrangements were completed; and nothing very important was done during the remainder of the session. Pitt, now seated on the opposition bench, brought the question of parliamentary reform a second time under the consideration of the Commons. He proposed to add to the House at once a hundred county members and several members for metropolitan districts, and to enact that every borough of which an election committee should report that the majority of voters appeared to be corrupt should lose the franchise. The motion was rejected by 293 votes to 149.

After the prorogation, Pitt visit the Continent for the first and last time. His travelling companion was one of his most intimate friends, a young man of his own age, who had already distinguished himself in Parliament by an engaging and natural eloquence, set off by the sweetest and most exquisitely modulated of human voices, and whose affectionate heart, caressing manners, and brilliant wit, made him the most delightful of companions, William Wilberforce. That was the time of Anglomania in France; and at Paris the son of the great Chatham was absolutely hunted by men of letters and women of fashion, and forced, much against his will, into political disputation. One remarkable saying which dropped from him during this tour has been preserved. A French

gentleman expressed some surprise at the immense influence which Fox, a man of pleasure, ruined by the dice-box and the turf, exercised over the English nation. "You have not," said Pitt, "been under the wand of the magician."

In November, 1783, the Parliament met again. The government had irresistible strength in the House of Commons, and seemed to be scarcely less strong in the House of Lords, but was, in truth, surrounded on every side by dangers. The King was impatiently waiting for the moment at which he could emancipate himself from a yoke which galled him so severely that he had more than once seriously thought of retiring to Hanover; and the King was scarcely more eager for a change than the nation. Fox and North had committed a fatal error. They ought to have known that coalitions between parties which have long been hostile can succeed only when the wish for coalition pervades the lower ranks of both. If the leaders unite before there is any disposition to union among the followers, the probability is that there will be a mutiny in both camps, and that the two revolted armies will make a truce with each other, in order to be revenged on those by whom they think that they have been betrayed. Thus it was in 1783. At the beginning of that eventful year, North had been the recognized head of the old Tory party, which though for a moment prostrated by the disastrous issue of the American war, was still a great power in the state. To him the clergy, the universities, and that large body of country gentlemen whose rallying cry was "Church and King," had long looked up with respect and confidence. Fox had, on the other hand, been the idol of the Whigs, and of the whole body of Protestant dissenters. The coalition at once alienated the most zealous Tories from North, and the most zealous Whigs from Fox. The University of Oxford, which had marked its opprobrium

of North's orthodoxy by electing him chancellor, the City of London, which had been during two and twenty years at war with the Court, were equally disgusted. Squires and rectors who had inherited the principles of the cavaliers of the preceding century, could not forgive their old leader for combining with disloyal subjects in order to put a force on the sovereign. The members of the Bill of Rights Society and of the Reform Associations were enraged by learning that their favorite orator now called the great champion of tyranny and corruption his noble friend. Two great multitudes were at once left without any head, and both at once turned their eyes on Pitt. One party saw in him the only man who could rescue the King; the other saw in him the only man who could purify the Parliament. He was supported on one side by Archbishop Markham, the preacher of divine right, and by Jenkinson the captain of the Prætorian band of the King's friends; on the other side by Jebb and Priestley, Sawbridge and Cartwright, Jack Wilkes and Horne Tooke. On the benches of the House of Commons, however, the ranks of the ministerial majority were unbroken; and that any statesman would venture to brave such a majority was thought impossible. No prince of the Hanoverian line had ever, under any provocation, ventured to appeal from the representative body to the constituent body. The ministers, therefore, notwithstanding the sullen looks and muttered words of displeasure with which their suggestions were received in the closet, notwithstanding the roar of obloquy which was rising louder and louder every day from every corner of the island, thought themselves secure.

Such was their confidence in their strength that, as soon as the Parliament had met, they brought forward a singularly bold and original plan for the government of the British territories in India. What was proposed was that the whole authority, which till that time had

been exercised over those territories by the East India Company, should be transferred to seven Commissioners who were to be named by Parliament, and were not to be removable at the pleasure of the Crown. Earl Fitzwilliam, the most intimate personal friend of Fox, was to be chairman of this board; and the eldest son of North was to be one of the members.

As soon as the outlines of the scheme were known, all the hatred which the coalition had excited burst forth with an astounding explosion. The question which ought undoubtedly to have been considered as paramount to every other was, whether the proposed change was likely to be beneficial or injurious to the thirty millions of people who were subject to the Company. But that question cannot be said to have been even seriously discussed. Burke, who, whether right or wrong in the conclusions to which he came, had at least the merit of looking at the subject in the right point of view, vainly reminded his hearers of that mighty population whose daily rice might depend on a vote of the British Parliament. He spoke, with even more than his wonted power of thought and language, about the desolation of Rohlicund, about the spoliation of Benares, about the evil policy which had suffered the tanks of the Carnatic to go to ruin; but he could scarcely obtain a hearing. The contending parties, to their shame it must be said, would listen to none but English topics. Out of doors the cry against the ministry was almost universal. Town and country were united. Corporations exclaimed against the violation of the charter of the greatest corporation in the realm. Tories and democrats joined in pronouncing the proposed board an unconstitutional body. It was to consist of Fox's nominees. The effect of this bill was to give, not to the Crown, but to him personally, whether in office or in opposition, an enormous power, a patronage sufficient to counterbalance

the patronage of the Treasury and of the Admiralty, and to decide the elections for fifty boroughs. He knew, it was said, he was hateful alike to King and people; and he had devised a plan which would make him independent of both. Some nicknamed him Cromwell, and some Carlo Khan. Wilberforce, with his usual felicity of expression, and with very unusual bitterness of feeling, described the scheme as the genuine offspring of the coalition, as marked with the features of both its parents, the corruption of one and the violence of the other. In spite of all opposition, however, the bill was supported in every stage by great majorities, was rapidly passed and was sent up to the Lords. To the general astonishment, when the second reading was moved in the Upper House, the opposition proposed an adjournment, and carried it by eighty-seven votes to seventy-nine. The cause of this strange turn of fortune was soon known. Pitt's cousin, Earl Temple, had been in the royal closet, and had there been authorized to let it be known that His Majesty would consider all who voted for the bill as his enemies. The ignominious commission was performed; and instantly a troop of Lords of the Bedchamber, of Bishops who wished to be translated, and of Scotch peers who wished to be re-elected, made haste to change sides. On a later day, the Lords rejected the bill. Fox and North were immediately directed to send their seals to the palace by their Under Secretaries; and Pitt was appointed First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The general opinion was, that there would be immediate dissolution. But Pitt wisely determined to give the public feeling time to gather strength. On this point he differed from his kinsman Temple. The consequence was, that Temple, who had been appointed one of the Secretaries of State, resigned his office forty-eight hours after he had accepted it, and

thus relieved the new government from a great load of unpopularity ; for all men of sense and honor, however strong might be their dislike of the India bill, disapproved of the manner in which that bill had been thrown out. Temple carried away with him the scandal which the best friends of the new government could not but lament. The fame of the young prime minister preserved its whiteness. He could declare with perfect truth that, if unconstitutional machinations had been employed, he had been no party to them.

He was, however, surrounded by difficulties and dangers. In the House of Lords, indeed, he had a majority ; nor could any orator of the opposition in that assembly be considered a match for Thurlow, who was now again Chancellor, or for Camden, who cordially supported the son of his old friend Chatham. But in the other House there was not a single eminent speaker among the official men who sate round Pitt. His most useful assistant was Dundas, who, though he had not eloquence, had sense, knowledge, readiness, and boldness. On the opposite benches was a powerful majority, led by Fox, who was supported by Burke, North and Sheridan. The heart of the young minister, stout at it was, almost died within him. He could not once close his eyes on the night which followed Temple's resignation. But, whatever his internal emotions might be, his language and deportment indicated nothing but unconquerable firmness and haughty confidence in his own powers. His contest against the House of Commons lasted from the 17th of December, 1783, to the 8th of March, 1784. In sixteen divisions the opposition triumphed. Again and again the King was requested to dismiss his ministers. But he was determined to go to Germany rather than yield. Pitt's resolution never wavered. The cry of the nation in his favor became vehement and almost furious. Addresses assuring him of public

support came up daily from every part of the kingdom. The freedom of the city of London was presented to him in a gold box. He went in state to receive this mark of distinction. He was sumptuously feasted in Grocers' Hall; and the shopkeepers of the Strand and Fleet street illuminated their houses in his honor. These things could not but produce an effect within the walls of Parliament. The ranks of the majority began to waver; a few passed over to the enemy; some skulked away; many were for capitulating while it was still possible to capitulate with the honors of war. Negotiations were opened with the view of forming an administration on a wide basis; but they had scarcely been opened when they were closed. The opposition demanded, as a preliminary article of the treaty, that Pitt should resign the Treasury; and with this demand Pitt steadfastly refused to comply. While the contest was raging, the Clerkship of the Pells, a sinecure place for life, worth three thousand a year, and tenable with a seat in the House of Commons, became vacant. The appointment was with the Chancellor of the Exchequer: nobody doubted that he would appoint himself, and nobody could have blamed him if he had done so: for such sinecure offices had always been defended on the ground that they enabled a few men of eminent abilities and small incomes to live without any profession, and to devote themselves to the service of the state. Pitt, in spite of the remonstrances of his friends, gave the Pells to his father's old adherent, Colonel Barré, a man distinguished by talent and eloquence, but poor and afflicted with blindness. By this arrangement a pension which the Rockingham administration had granted to Barré was saved to the public. Never was there a happier stroke of policy. About treaties, wars, expeditions, tariffs, budgets, there will always be room for dispute. The policy which is applauded by half the nation may be con-

demned by the other half. But pecuniary disinterestedness everybody comprehends. It is a great thing for a man who has only three hundred a year to be able to show that he considers three thousand a year as mere dirt beneath his feet, when compared with the public interest and the public esteem. Pitt had his reward. No minister was ever more rancorously libelled ; but, even when he was known to be overwhelmed with debt, when millions were passing through his hands, when the wealthiest magnates of the realm were soliciting him for marquises and garters, his bitterest enemies did not dare to accuse him of touching unlawful gain.

At length the hard fought battle ended. A final remonstrance, drawn up by Burke with admirable skill, was carried on the 8th of March by a single vote in a full House. Had the experiment been repeated, the supporters of the coalition would probably have been in a minority. But the supplies had been voted ; the Mutiny Bill had been passed ; and the Parliament was dissolved.

The popular constituent bodies all over the country were in general enthusiastic on the side of the new government. A hundred and sixty supporters of the coalition lost their seats. The First Lord of the Treasury himself came in at the head of the poll for the University of Cambridge. His young friend, Wilberforce, was elected knight of the great shire of York, in opposition to the whole influence of the Fitzwilliams, Cavendishes, Dundases, and Saviles. In the midst of such triumphs Pitt completed his twenty-fifth year. He was now the greatest subject that England had seen during many generations. He domineered absolutely over the cabinet, and was the favorite at once of the Sovereign, of the Parliament, and of the nation. His father had never been so powerful, nor Walpole, nor Marlborough.

This narrative has now reached a point, be-

yond which a full history of the life of Pitt would be a history of England, or rather of the whole civilized world ; and for such a history this is not the proper place. Here a very slight sketch must suffice ; and in that sketch prominence will be given to such points as may enable a reader who is already acquainted with the general course of events to form a just notion of the character of the man on whom so much depended.

If we wish to arrive at a correct judgment of Pitt's merits and defects, we must never forget that he belonged to a peculiar class of statesmen, and that he must be tried by a peculiar standard. It is not easy to compare him fairly with such men as Ximenes and Sully, Richelieu and Oxenstiern, John de Witt and Warren Hastings. The means by which those politicians governed great communities were of quite a different kind from those which Pitt was under the necessity of employing. Some talents, which they never had any opportunity of showing that they possessed, were developed in him to an extraordinary degree. In some qualities, on the other hand, to which they owe a large part of their fame, he was decidedly their inferior. They transacted business in their closets, or at boards where a few confidential councillors sate. It was his lot to be born in an age and in a country in which parliamentary government was completely established ; his whole training from infancy was such as fitted him to bear a part in parliamentary government ; and from the prime of his manhood to his death, all the powers of his vigorous mind were almost constantly exerted in the work of parliamentary government. He accordingly became the greatest master of the whole art of parliamentary government that has ever existed, a greater than Montague or Walpole, a greater than his father Chatham or his rival Fox, a greater than either of his illustrious successors, Canning and Peel.

Parliamentary government, like every other contrivance of man, has its advantages and its disadvantages. On the advantages there is no need to dilate. The history of England during the hundred and seventy years which have elapsed since the House of Commons became the most powerful body in the state, her immense and still growing prosperity, her freedom, her tranquillity, her greatness in arts, in sciences, and in arms, her maritime ascendancy, the marvels of her public credit, her American, her African, her Australian, her Asiatic empires, sufficiently prove the excellence of her institutions. But those institutions, though excellent, are assuredly not perfect. Parliamentary government is government by speaking. In such a government, the power of speaking is the most highly prized of all the qualities which a politician can possess; and that power may exist, in the highest degree, without judgment, without fortitude, without skill in reading the characters of men or the signs of the times, without any knowledge of the principles of legislation or political economy and without any skill in diplomacy or in the administration of war. Nay, it may well happen that those very intellectual qualities which give a peculiar charm to the speeches of a public man may be incompatible with the qualities which would fit him to meet a pressing emergency with promptitude and firmness. It was thus with Charles Townshend. It was thus with Windham. It was a privilege to listen to those accomplished and ingenious orators. But in a perilous crisis they would have been found far inferior in all the qualities of rulers to such a man as Oliver Cromwell, who talked nonsense, or as William the Silent, who did not talk at all. When parliamentary government is established, a Charles Townshend or a Windham will almost always exercise much greater influence than such men as the great Protector of England, or as the founder of the

Batavian commonwealth. In such a government, parliamentary talent, though quite distinct from the talents of a good executive or judicial officer, will be a chief qualification for executive and judicial office. From the Book of Dignities a curious list might be made out of Chancellors ignorant of the principles of equity, and First Lords of the Admiralty ignorant of the principles of navigation, of Colonial ministers who could not repeat the names of the Colonies, of Lords of the Treasury who did not know the difference between funded and unfunded debt, and of Secretaries of the India Board who did not know whether the Mahrattas were Mahometans or Hindoos. On these grounds, some persons, incapable of seeing more than one side of a question, have pronounced parliamentary government a positive evil, and have maintained that the administration would be greatly improved if the power, now exercised by a large assembly, were transferred to a single person. Men of sense will probably think the remedy very much worse than the disease, and will be of opinion that there would be small gain in exchanging Charles Townshend and Windham for the Prince of the Peace, or the poor slave and dog Steenie.

Pitt was emphatically the man of parliamentary government, the type of his class, the minion, the child, the spoiled child, of the House of Commons. For the House of Commons he had a hereditary, an infantine love. Through his whole boyhood, the House of Commons was never out of his thoughts, or out of the thoughts of his instructors. Reciting at his father's knee, reading Thucydides and Cicero into English, analyzing the great Attic speeches on the Embassy and on the Crown, he was constantly in training for the conflicts of the House of Commons. He was a distinguished member of the House of Commons at twenty-one. The ability which he had displayed in the House of Commons made him

the most powerful subject in Europe before he was twenty-five. It would have been happy for himself and for his country if his elevation had been deferred. Eight or ten years, during which he would have had leisure and opportunity for reading and reflection, for foreign travel, for social intercourse and free exchange of thought on equal terms with a great variety of companions, would have supplied what, without any fault on his part, was wanting to his powerful intellect. He had all the knowledge that he could be expected to have; that is to say, all the knowledge that a man can acquire while he is a student at Cambridge, and all the knowledge that a man can acquire when he is First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer. But the stock of general information which he brought from college, extraordinary for a boy, was far inferior to what Fox possessed, and beggarly when compared with the massy, the splendid, the various treasures laid up in the large mind of Burke. After Pitt became minister, he had no leisure to learn more than was necessary for the purposes of the day which was passing over him. What was necessary for those purposes such a man could learn with little difficulty. He was surrounded by experienced and able public servants. He could at any moment command their best assistance. From the stores which they produced his vigorous mind rapidly collected the materials for a good parliamentary case: and that was enough. Legislation and administration were with him secondary matters. To the work of framing statutes, of negotiating treaties, of organizing fleets and armies, of sending forth expeditions, he gave only the leavings of his time and the dregs of his fine intellect. The strength and sap of his mind were all drawn in a different direction. It was when the House of Commons was to be convinced and persuaded that he put forth all his powers.

Of those powers we must form our estimate chiefly from tradition ; for of all the eminent speakers of the last age Pitt has suffered most from the reporters. Even while he was still living, critics remarked that his eloquence could not be preserved, that he must be heard to be appreciated. They more than once applied to him the sentence in which Tacitus describes the fate of a senator whose rhetoric was admired in the Augustan age : “ *Haterii canorum illud et profluens cum ipso simul exstinctum est.*” There is, however, abundant evidence that nature had bestowed on Pitt the talents of a great orator ; and those talents had been developed in a very peculiar manner, first by his education, and secondly by the high official position to which he rose early, and in which he passed the greater part of his public life.

At his first appearance in Parliament he showed himself superior to all his contemporaries in command of language. He could pour forth a long succession of round and stately periods without premeditation, without ever pausing for a word, without ever repeating a word, in a voice of silver clearness, and with a pronunciation so articulate that not a letter was slurred over. He had less amplitude of mind and less richness of imagination than Burke, less ingenuity than Windham, less wit than Sheridan, less perfect mastery of dialectical fence, and less of that highest sort of eloquence which consists of reason and passion fused together, than Fox. Yet the almost unanimous judgment of those who were in the habit of listening to that remarkable race of men placed Pitt, as a speaker, above Burke, above Windham, above Sheridan, and not below Fox. His declamation was copious, polished, and splendid. In power of sarcasm he was probably not surpassed by any speaker, ancient or modern ; and of this formidable weapon he made merciless use. In two parts of the oratorical art which are of the highest

value to a minister of state he was singularly expert. No man knew better how to be luminous or how to be obscure. When he wished to be understood, he never failed to make himself understood. He could with ease present to his audience, not perhaps an exact or profound, but a clear, popular, and plausible view of the most extensive and complicated subject. Nothing was out of place; nothing was forgotten; minute details, dates, sums of money, were all faithfully preserved in his memory. Even intricate questions of finance, when explained by him, seemed clear to the plainest man among his hearers. On the other hand, when he did not wish to be explicit,—and no man who is at the head of affairs always wishes to be explicit,—he had a marvellous power of saying nothing in language which left on his audience the impression that he had said a great deal. He was at once the only man who could open a budget without notes, and the only man who, as Windham said, could speak that most elaborately evasive and unmeaning of human compositions, a King's speech, without premeditation.

The effect of oratory will always to a great extent depend on the character of the orator. There perhaps never were two speakers whose eloquence had more of what may be called the race, more of the flavor imparted by moral qualities, than Fox and Pitt. The speeches of Fox owe a great part of their charm to that warmth and softness of heart, that sympathy with human suffering, that admiration for everything great and beautiful, and that hatred of cruelty and injustice, which interest and delight us even in the most defective reports. No person, on the other hand, could hear Pitt without perceiving him to be a man of high, intrepid, and commanding spirit, proudly conscious of his own rectitude and of his own intellectual superiority, incapable of the low vices of fear and envy, but too prone to feel and to

show disdain. Pride, indeed, pervaded the whole man, was written in the harsh, rigid lines of his face, was marked by the way in which he walked, in which he sate, in which he stood, and, above all, in which he bowed. Such pride, of course, inflicted many wounds. It may confidently be affirmed that there cannot be found, in all the ten thousand invectives written against Fox, a word indicating that his demeanor had ever made a single personal enemy. On the other hand, several men of note who had been partial to Pitt, and who to the last continued to approve his public conduct and to support his administration, Cumberland, for example, Boswell, and Matthias, were so much irritated, by the contempt with which he treated them, that they complained in print of their wrongs. But his pride, though it made him bitterly disliked by individuals, inspired the great body of his followers in Parliament and throughout the country with respect and confidence. They took him at his own valuation. They saw that his self-esteem was not that of an upstart, who was drunk with good luck and with applause, and who, if fortune turned, would sink from arrogance into abject humility. It was that of the magnanimous man so finely described by Aristotle in the *Ethics*, of the man who thinks himself worthy of great things, being in truth worthy. It sprang from a consciousness of great powers and great virtues, and was never so conspicuously displayed as in the midst of difficulties and dangers which would have unnerved and bowed down any ordinary mind. It was closely connected, too, with an ambition which had no mixture of low cupidity. There was something noble in the cynical disdain with which the mighty minister scattered riches and titles to right and left among those who valued them, while he spurned them out of his own way. Poor himself, he was surrounded by friends on whom he had bestowed

three thousand, six thousand, ten thousand a year. Plain Mister himself, he had made more lords than any three ministers that had preceded him. The garter, for which the first dukes in the kingdom were contending, was repeatedly offered to him, and offered in vain.

The correctness of his private life added much to the dignity of his public character. In the relations of son, brother, uncle, master, friend, his conduct was exemplary. In the small circle of his intimate associates, he was amiable, affectionate, even playful. They loved him sincerely ; they regretted him long and they would hardly admit that he who was so kind and gentle with them could be stern and haughty with others. He indulged, indeed, somewhat too freely in wine, which he had early been directed to take as a medicine, and which use had made a necessary of life to him. But it was very seldom that any indication of undue excess could be detected in his tones or gestures ; and, in truth, two bottles of port were little more to him than two dishes of tea. He had, when he was first introduced into the clubs of Saint James's Street, shown a strong taste for play ; but he had the prudence and the resolution to stop before this taste had acquired the strength of habit. From the passion which generally exercises the most tyrannical dominion over the young he possessed an immunity, which is probably to be ascribed partly to his temperament and partly to his situation. His constitution was feeble ; he was very shy ; and he was very busy. The strictness of his morals furnished such buffoons as Peter Pindar and Captain Morris with an inexhaustible theme for merriment of no very delicate kind. But the great body of the middle class of Englishmen could not see the joke. They warmly praised the young statesman for commanding his passions, and for covering his frailties, if he had frailties, with decorous obscurity,

and would have been very far indeed from thinking better of him if he had vindicated himself from the taunts of his enemies by taking under his protection a Nancy Parsons or a Marianne Clark.

No part of the immense popularity which Pitt long enjoyed is to be attributed to the eulogies of wits and poets. It might have been naturally expected that a man of genius, of learning, of taste, an orator whose diction was often compared to that of Tully, the representative, too, of a great university, would have taken a peculiar pleasure in befriending eminent writers, to whatever political party they might have belonged. The love of literature had induced Augustus to heap benefits on Pompeians, Somers to be the protector of non-jurors, Harley to make the fortunes of Whigs. But it could not move Pitt to show any favor even to Pittites. He was doubtless right in thinking that, in general, poetry, history and philosophy ought to be suffered, like calico and cutlery, to find their proper price in the market, and that to teach men of letters to look habitually to the state for their recompense is bad for the state and bad for letters. Assuredly nothing can be more absurd or mischievous than to waste the public money in bounties for the purpose of inducing people who ought to be weighing out grocery or measuring out drapery to write bad or middling books. But, though the sound rule is that authors should be left to be remunerated by their readers, there will, in every generation, be a few exceptions to this rule. To distinguish these special cases from the mass is an employment well worthy of the faculties of a great and accomplished ruler; and Pitt would assuredly have had little difficulty in finding such cases. While he was in power, the greatest philologist of the age, his own contemporary at Cambridge, was reduced to earn a livelihood by the lowest literary drudgery, and spend in

writing squibs for the *Morning Chronicle* years to which we might have owed an all but perfect text of the whole tragic and comic drama of Athens. The greatest historian of the age, forced by poverty to leave his country, completed his immortal work on the shores of Lake Lemn. The political heterodoxy of Porson, and the religious heterodoxy of Gibbon, may perhaps be pleaded in defence of the minister by whom those eminent men were neglected. But there were other cases in which no such excuse could be set up. Scarcely had Pitt obtained possession of unbounded power when an aged writer of the highest eminence, who had made very little by his writings, and who was sinking into the grave under a load of infirmities and sorrows, wanted five or six hundred pounds to enable him, during the winter or two which might still remain to him, to draw his breath more easily in the soft climate of Italy. Not a farthing was to be obtained; and before Christmas the author of the *English Dictionary* and of the *Lives of the Poets* had gasped his last in the river fog and coal smoke of Fleet Street. A few months after the death of Johnson appeared the *Task*, incomparably the best poem that any Englishman then living had produced—a poem, too, which could hardly fail to excite in a well constituted mind a feeling of esteem and compassion for the poet, a man of genius and virtue, whose means were scanty, and whom the most cruel of all the calamities incident to humanity had made incapable of supporting himself by vigorous and sustained exertion. Nowhere had Chatham been praised with more enthusiasm, or in verse more worthy of the subject, than in the *Task*. The son of Chatham, however, contented himself with reading and admiring the book, and left the author to starve. The pension which, long after, enabled poor Cowper to close his melancholy life, unmolested by duns and bailiffs, was obtained for him by the strenuous kindness

of Lord Spencer. What a contrast between the way in which Pitt acted towards Johnson and the way in which Lord Grey acted towards his political enemy Scott, when Scott, worn out by misfortune and disease, was advised to try the effect of the Italian air! What a contrast between the way in which Pitt acted towards Cowper and the way in which Burke, a poor man and out of place, acted towards Crabbe! Even Dundas, who made no pretensions to literary taste, and was content to be considered as a hard-headed and somewhat coarse man of business, was, when compared with his eloquent and classically educated friend, a Mæcenas or a Leo. Dundas made Burns an exciseman, with seventy pounds a year; and this was more than Pitt, during his long tenure of power, did for the encouragement of letters. Even those who may think that it is, in general, no part of the duty of a government to reward literary merit will hardly deny that a government, which has much lucrative church preferment in its gift, is bound, in distributing that preferment, not to overlook divines whose writings have rendered great service to the cause of religion. But it seems never to have occurred to Pitt that he lay under any such obligation. All the theological works of all the numerous bishops whom he made and translated are not, when put together, worth fifty pages of the *Horæ Paulinæ*, of the *Natural Theology*, or of the *View of the Evidences of Christianity*. But on Paley the all-powerful minister never bestowed the smallest benefice. Artists Pitt treated as contemptuously as writers. For painting he did simply nothing. Sculptors, who had been selected to execute monuments voted by Parliament, had to haunt the ante-chambers of the Treasury during many years before they could obtain a farthing from him. One of them, after vainly soliciting the minister for payment during fourteen years, had the courage to present a memorial to the King, and thus obtained

tardy and ungracious justice. Architects it was absolutely necessary to employ; and the worst that could be found seem to have been employed. Not a single fine public building of any kind or in any style was erected during his long administration. It may be confidently affirmed that no ruler whose abilities and attainments would bear any comparison with his has ever shown such cold disdain for what is excellent in arts and letters.

His first administration lasted seventeen years. That long period is divided by a strongly marked line into two almost exactly equal parts. The first part ended and the second began in the autumn of 1792. Throughout both parts Pitt displayed in the highest degree the talents of a parliamentary leader. During the first part he was a fortunate and, in many respects, a skilful administrator. With the difficulties which he had to encounter during the second part he was altogether incapable of contending; but his eloquence and his perfect mastery of the tactics of the House of Commons concealed his incapacity from the multitude.

The eight years which followed the general election of 1784 were as tranquil and prosperous as any eight years in the whole history of England. Neighboring nations which had lately been in arms against her, and which had flattered themselves that in losing her American colonies, she had lost a chief source of her wealth and of her power, saw with wonder and vexation, that she was more wealthy and more powerful than ever. Her trade increased. Her manufactures flourished. Her exchequer was full to overflowing. Very idle apprehensions were generally entertained, that the public debt, though much less than a third of the debt which we now bear with ease, would be found too heavy for the strength of the nation. Those apprehensions might not perhaps have been easily quieted by reason. But Pitt qui-

eted them by a juggle. He succeeded in persuading first himself, and then the whole nation, his opponents included, that a new sinking fund, which, so far as it differed from former sinking funds, differed for the worse, would, by virtue of some mysterious power of propagation belonging to money, put into the pocket of the public creditor great sums not taken out of the pocket of the tax-payer. The country, terrified by a danger which was no danger, hailed with delight and boundless confidence a remedy which was no remedy. The minister was almost universally extolled as the greatest of financiers. Meanwhile both the branches of the House of Bourbon found that England was as formidable an antagonist as she had ever been. France had formed a plan for reducing Holland to vassalage. But England interposed; and France receded. Spain interrupted by violence the trade of our merchants with the regions near the Oregon. But England armed; and Spain receded. Within the island there was profound tranquillity. The King was, for the first time, popular. During the twenty-three years which had followed his accession he had not been loved by his subjects. His domestic virtues were acknowledged. But it was generally thought that the good qualities by which he was distinguished in private life were wanting to his political character. As a Sovereign, he was resentful, unforgiving, stubborn, cunning. Under his rule the country had sustained cruel disgraces and disasters; and every one of those disgraces and disasters was imputed to his strong antipathies, and to his perverse obstinacy in the wrong. One statesman after another complained that he had been induced by royal caresses, entreaties, and promises, to undertake the direction of affairs at a difficult conjuncture, and that, as soon as he had, not without sullyng his fame and alienating his best friends, served the turn for which he was

wanted, his ungrateful master began to intrigue against him, and to canvass against him. Grenville, Rockingham, Chatham, men of widely different characters, but all three upright and high-spirited, agreed in thinking that the Prince under whom they had successively held the highest place in the government was one of the most insincere of mankind. His confidence was reposed, they said, not in those known and responsible counsellors to whom he had delivered the seals of office, but in secret advisers who stole up the back stairs into his closet. In Parliament, his ministers, while defending themselves against the attacks of the opposition in front, were perpetually, at his instigation, assailed on the flank or in the rear by a vile band of mercenaries who called themselves his friends. These men constantly, while in possession of lucrative places in his service, spoke and voted against bills which he had authorized the First Lord of the Treasury or the Secretary of State to bring in. But from the day on which Pitt was placed at the head of affairs there was an end of secret influence. His haughty and aspiring spirit was not to be satisfied with the mere show of power. Any attempt to undermine him at Court, any mutinous movement among his followers in the House of Commons, was certain to be at once put down. He had only to tender his resignation; and he could dictate his own terms. For he, and he alone, stood between the King and the Coalition. He was therefore little less than Mayor of the Palace. The nation loudly applauded the King for having the wisdom to repose entire confidence in so excellent a minister. His majesty's private virtues now began to produce their full effect. He was generally regarded as the model of a respectable country gentleman, honest, good-natured, sober, religious. He rose early; he dined temperately; he was strictly faithful to his wife; he never missed

church; and at church he never missed a response. His people heartily prayed that he might long reign over them; and they prayed the more heartily because his virtues were set off to the best advantage by the vices and follies of the Prince of Wales, who lived in close intimacy with the chiefs of the opposition.

How strong this feeling was in the public mind appeared signally on one great occasion. In the autumn of 1788 the King became insane. The opposition, eager for office, committed the great indiscretion of asserting that the heir apparent had, by the fundamental laws of England a right to be Regent with the full powers of royalty. Pitt on the other hand, maintained it to be the constitutional doctrine that, when a Sovereign is, by reason of infancy, disease, or absence, incapable of exercising the regal functions, it belongs to the estates of the realm to determine who shall be the vicegerent, and with what portion of the executive authority such vicegerent shall be entrusted. A long and violent contest followed, in which Pitt was supported by the great body of the people with as much enthusiasm as during the first months of his administration. Tories with one voice applauded him for defending the sick-bed of a virtuous and unhappy Sovereign against a disloyal faction and an undutiful son. Not a few Whigs applauded him for asserting the authority of Parliaments and the principles of the Revolution, in opposition to a doctrine which seemed to have too much affinity with the servile theory of indefeasible hereditary right. The middle class, always zealous on the side of decency and the domestic virtues, looked forward with dismay to a reign resembling that of Charles II. The palace, which had now been, during thirty years, the pattern of an English home, would be a public nuisance, a school of profligacy. To the good King's repast of mutton and lemonade, despatched at three o'clock, would

succeed midnight banquets, from which the guests would be carried home speechless. To the backgammon board at which the good King played for a little silver with his equerries, would succeed faro tables from which young patricians who had sate down rich would rise up beggars. The drawing-room, from which the frown of the Queen had repelled a whole generation of frail beauties, would now be again what it had been in the days of Barbara Palmer and Louisa de Querouaille. Nay, severely as the public reprobated the Prince's many illicit attachments, his one virtuous attachment was reprobated more severely still. Even in grave and pious circles his Protestant mistresses gave less scandal than his Popish wife. That he must be Regent nobody ventured to deny. But he and his friends were so unpopular that Pitt could, with general approbation, propose to limit the powers of the Regent by restrictions which it would have been impossible to subject a Prince beloved and trusted by the country. Some interested men, fully expecting a change of administration, went over to the opposition. But the majority, purified by these desertions, closed its ranks, and presented a more firm array than ever to the enemy. In every division Pitt was victorious. When at length, after a stormy interregnum of three months, it was announced, on the very eve of the inauguration of the Regent, that the King was himself again, the nation was wild with delight. On the evening of the day on which His Majesty resumed his functions, a spontaneous illumination, the most general that had ever been seen in England, brightened the whole vast space from Highgate to Tooting, and from Hammersmith to Greenwich. On the day on which he returned thanks in the cathedral of his capital, all the horses and carriages within a hundred miles of London were too few for the multitudes which flocked to see him pass through the

streets. A second illumination followed, which was even superior to the first magnificence. Pitt with difficulty escaped from the tumultuous kindness of an innumerable multitude which insisted on drawing his coach from Saint Paul's Churchyard to Downing Street. This was the moment at which his fame and fortune may be said to have reached the zenith. His influence in the closet was as great as that of Carr or Villiers had been. His dominion over the Parliament was more absolute than that of Walpole or Pelham had been. He was at the same time as high in the favor of the populace as ever Wilkes or Sacheverell had been. Nothing did more to raise his character than his noble poverty. It was well known that, if he had been dismissed from office after more than five years of boundless power, he would hardly have carried out with him a sum sufficient to furnish the set of chamber in which, as he cheerfully declared, he meant to resume the practice of the law. His admirers, however, were by no means disposed to suffer him to depend on daily toil for his daily bread. The voluntary contributions which were awaiting his acceptance in the city of London alone would have sufficed to make him a rich man. But it may be doubted whether his haughty spirit would have stooped to accept a provision so honorably earned and so honorably bestowed.

To such a height of power and glory had this extraordinary man risen at twenty-nine years of age. And now the tide was on the turn. Only ten days after the triumphant procession to Saint Paul's, the States-General of France, after an interval of a hundred and seventy-four years, met at Versailles.

The nature of the great Revolution which followed was long very imperfectly understood in this country. Burke saw much further than any of his contemporaries: but whatever his sagacity descried was refracted and discolored

by his passions and his imagination. More than three years elapsed before the principles of the English administration underwent any material change. Nothing could as yet be milder or more strictly constitutional than the minister's domestic policy. Not a single act indicating an arbitrary temper or a jealousy of the people could be imputed to him. He had never applied to Parliament for any extraordinary powers. He had never used with harshness the ordinary powers entrusted by the constitution to the executive government. Not a single state prosecution which would even now be called oppressive had been instituted by him. Indeed, the only oppressive state prosecution instituted during the first eight years of his administration was that of Stockdale, which is to be attributed, not to the government, but to the chiefs of the opposition. In office, Pitt had redeemed the pledges which he had, at his entrance into public life, given to the supporters of parliamentary reform. He had, in 1785, brought forward a judicious plan for the improvement of the representative system, and had prevailed on the King, not only to refrain from talking against that plan, but to recommend it to the Houses in a speech from the throne.* This attempt failed; but there can be little doubt that, if the French Revolution had not produced a violent reaction of public feeling, Pitt would have performed, with little difficulty and no danger, that great work which, at a later period, Lord Grey could accomplish only by means which for a time loosened the very foundations of the commonwealth. When the atrocities of the slave trade were first brought under the consideration of Parliament,

* The speech with which the King opened the session of 1785 concluded with an assurance that His Majesty would heartily concur in every measure which could tend to secure the true principles of the constitution. These words were at the time understood to refer to Pitt's Reform Bill.

no abolitionist was more zealous than Pitt. When sickness prevented Wilberforce from appearing in public, his place was most efficiently supplied by his friend the minister. A humane bill, which mitigated the horrors of the middle passage, was, in 1788, carried by the eloquence and determined spirit of Pitt, in spite of the opposition of some of his own colleagues; and it ought always to be remembered to his honor that, in order to carry that bill, he kept the Houses sitting, in spite of many murmurs, long after the business of the government had been done, and the Appropriation Act passed. In 1791 he cordially concurred with Fox in maintaining the sound constitutional doctrine, that an impeachment is not terminated by a dissolution. In the course of the same year the two great rivals contended side by side in a far more important cause. They are fairly entitled to divide the high honor of having added to our statute-book the inestimable law which places the liberty of the press under the protection of juries. On one occasion, and one alone, Pitt, during the first half of his long administration, acted in a manner unworthy of an enlightened Whig. In the debate on the Test Act, he stooped to gratify the master whom he served, the university which he represented, and the great body of clergymen and country gentlemen on whose support he rested, by talking, with little heartiness, indeed, and no asperity, the language of a Tory. With this single exception, his conduct from the end of 1783 to the middle of 1792 was that of an honest friend of civil and religious liberty.

Nor did anything, during that period, indicate that he loved war, or harbored any malevolent feeling against any neighboring nation. Those French writers who have represented him as a Hannibal sworn in childhood by his father to bear eternal hatred to France, as having, by mysterious intrigues and lavish bribes, instigated the leading Jacobins to commit those

excesses which dishonored the Revolution, as having been the real author of the first coalition, know nothing of his character or of his history. So far was he from being a deadly enemy to France, that his laudible attempts to bring about a closer connection with that country by means of a wise and liberal treaty of commerce brought on him the severe censure of the opposition. He was told in the House of Commons that he was a degenerate son, and that his partiality for the hereditary foes of our island was enough to make his great father's bones stir under the pavement of the Abbey.

And this man, whose name, if he had been so fortunate as to die in 1792, would now have been associated with peace, with freedom, with philanthropy, with temperate reform, with mild and constitutional administration, lived to associate his name with arbitrary government, with harsh laws harshly executed, with alien bills, with gagging bills, with suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, with cruel punishments inflicted on some political agitators, with unjustifiable prosecutions instituted against others and with the most costly and most sanguinary wars of modern times. He lived to be held up to obloquy as the stern oppressor of England, and the indefatigable disturber of Europe. Poets, contrasting his earlier with his later years, likened him sometimes to the apostle who kissed in order to betray, and sometimes to the evil angels who kept not their first estate. A satirist of great genius introduced the fiends of Famine, Slaughter, and Fire, proclaiming that they had received their commission from One whose name was formed of four letters, and promising to give their employer ample proofs of gratitude. Famine would gnaw the multitude till they should rise against him in madness. The demon of Slaughter would impel them to tear him limb from limb. But Fire boasted that she alone could reward him as he deserved, and that she would cling

round him to all eternity. By the French press and the French tribune every crime that disgraced and every calamity that afflicted France was ascribed to the monster Pitt and his guineas. While the Jacobins were dominant, it was he who had corrupted the Gironde, who had raised Lyons and Bordeaux against the Convention, who had suborned Paris to assassinate Lepelletier, and Cecilia Regnault to assassinate Robespierre. When the Thermidorian reaction came, all the atrocities of the Reign of Terror were imputed to him. Collot D'Herbois and Fouquier Tinville had been his pensioners. It was he who had hired the murderers of September, who had dictated the pamphlets of Marat and the Carmagnoles of Barère, who had paid Lebon to deluge Arras with blood, and Carrier to choke the Loire with corpses.

The truth is that he liked neither war nor arbitrary government. He was a lover of peace and freedom, driven, by a stress against which it was hardly possible for any will or any intellect to struggle, out of the course to which his inclinations pointed, and for which his abilities and acquirements fitted him, and forced into a policy repugnant to his feelings and unsuited to his talents.

The charge of apostasy is grossly unjust. A man ought no more to be called an apostate because his opinions alter with the opinions of the great body of his contemporaries than he ought to be called an oriental traveller because he is always going round from west to east with the globe and everything that is upon it. Between the spring of 1789 and the close of 1792, the public mind of England underwent a great change. If the change of Pitt's sentiments attracted peculiar notice, it was not because he changed more than his neighbors; for in fact he changed less than most of them; but because his position was far more conspicuous than theirs; because he was, till Bona-

parte appeared, the individual who filled the greatest space in the eyes of the inhabitants of the civilized world. During a short time the nation, and Pitt, as one of the nation, looked with interest and approbation on the French Revolution. But soon vast confiscations, the violent sweeping away of ancient institutions, the domination of clubs, the barbarities of mobs maddened by famine and hatred, produced a reaction here. The court, the nobility, the gentry, the clergy, the manufacturers, the merchants, in short, nineteen twentieths of those who had good roofs over their heads and good coats on their backs, became eager and intolerant Anti-jacobins. This feeling was at least as strong among the minister's adversaries as among his supporters. Fox in vain attempted to restrain his followers. All his genius, all his vast personal influence, could not prevent them from rising up against him in general mutiny. Burke set the example of revolt; and Burke was in no long time joined by Portland, Spencer, Fitzwilliam, Loughborough, Carlisle, Malmesbury, Windham, Elliot. In the House of Commons, the followers of the great Whig statesman and orator diminished from about a hundred and sixty to fifty. In the House of Lords he had but ten or twelve adherents left. There can be no doubt that there would have been a similar mutiny on the ministerial benches if Pitt had obstinately resisted the general wish. Pressed at once by his master and by his colleagues, by old friends and by old opponents, he abandoned slowly and reluctantly, the policy which was dear to his heart. He labored hard to avert the European war. When the European war broke out, he still flattered himself that it would not be necessary for this country to take either side. In the spring of 1792 he congratulated the Parliament on the prospect of long and profound peace, and proved his sincerity by proposing large remissions of taxation. Down to

the end of that year he continued to cherish the hope that England might be able to preserve neutrality. But the passions which raged on both sides of the channel were not to be restrained. The republicans who ruled France were inflamed by a fanaticism resembling that of the Mussulmans, who, with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other, went forth, conquering and converting, eastward to the Bay of Bengal, and westward to the Pillars of Hercules. The higher and middle classes of England were animated by zeal not less fiery than that of the Crusaders who raised the cry of *Deus vult* at Clermont. The impulse which drove the two nations to a collision was not to be arrested by the abilities or by the authority of any single man. As Pitt was in front of his fellows, and towered high above them, he seemed to lead them. But in fact he was violently pushed on by them, and, had he held back but a little more than he did, would have been thrust out of their way or trampled under their feet.

He yielded to the current: and from that day his misfortunes began. The truth is that there were only two consistent courses before him. Since he did not choose to oppose himself, side by side with Fox, to the public feeling, he should have taken the advice of Burke, and should have availed himself of that feeling to the full extent. If it was impossible to preserve peace, he should have adopted the only policy which could lead to victory. He should have proclaimed a Holy War for religion, morality, property, order, public law, and should have thus opposed to the Jacobins an energy equal to their own. Unhappily he tried to find a middle path; and he found one which united all that was worst in both extremes. He went to war; but he would not understand the peculiar character of that war. He was obstinately blind to the plain fact, that he was contending against a state which was also a

sect, and that the new quarrel between England and France was of quite a different kind from the old quarrels about colonies in America and fortresses in the Netherlands. He had to combat frantic enthusiasm, boundless ambition, restless activity, the wildest and most audacious spirit of innovation; and he acted as if he had to deal with the harlots and fops of the old Court of Versailles, with Madame de Pompadour and the Abbé de Bernis. It was pitiable to hear him, year after year, proving to an admiring audience that the wicked Republic was exhausted, that she could not hold out, that her credit was gone, and her assignats were not worth more than the paper of which they were made; as if credit was necessary to a government of which the principle was rapine, as if Alboin could not turn Italy into a desert till he had negotiated a loan at five per cent., as if the exchequer bills of Attila had been at par. It was impossible that a man who so completely mistook the nature of a contest could carry on that contest successfully. Great as Pitt's abilities were, his military administration was that of a driveller. He was at the head of a nation engaged in a struggle for life and death, of a nation eminently distinguished by all the physical and all the moral qualities which make excellent soldiers. The resources at his command were unlimited. The Parliament was even more ready to grant him men and money than he was to ask for them. In such an emergency, and with such means, such a statesman as Richelieu, as Louvois, as Chat-ham, as Wellesley, would have created in a few months one of the finest armies in the world, and would soon have discovered and brought forward generals worthy to command such an army. Germany might have been saved by another Blenheim; Flanders recovered by another Ramilies; another Poitiers might have delivered the Royalist and Catholic provinces of France from a yoke which they abhorred,

and might have spread terror even to the barriers of Paris. But the fact is, that, after eight years of war, after a vast destruction of life, after an expenditure of wealth far exceeding the expenditure of the American War, of the Seven Years' War, of the war of the Austrian Succession, and of the war of the Spanish Succession, united, the English army, under Pitt, was the laughing-stock of all Europe. It could not boast of one single brilliant exploit. It had never shown itself on the Continent but to be beaten, chased, forced to re-embark, or forced to capitulate. To take some sugar island in the West Indies, to scatter some mob of half-naked Irish peasants, such were the most splendid victories won by the British troops under Pitt's auspices.

The English navy no mismanagement could ruin. But during a long period whatever mismanagement could do was done. The Earl of Chatham, without a single qualification for high public trust, was made, by fraternal partiality, First Lord of the Admiralty, and was kept in that great post during two years of a war in which the very existence of the state depended on the efficiency of the fleet. He continued to doze away and trifle away the time which ought to have been devoted to the public service, till the whole mercantile body, though generally disposed to support the government, complained bitterly that our flag gave no protection to our trade. Fortunately he was succeeded by George Earl Spencer, one of those chiefs of the Whig party who, in the great schism caused by the French Revolution, had followed Burke. Lord Spencer though inferior to many of his colleagues as an orator, was decidedly the best administrator among them. To him it was owing that a long and gloomy succession of days of fasting, and, most emphatically, of humiliation, was interrupted, twice in the short space of eleven

months, by days of thanksgiving for great victories.

It may seem paradoxical to say that the incapacity which Pitt showed in all that related to the conduct of the war is, in some sense, the most decisive proof that he was a man of very extraordinary abilities. Yet this is the simple truth. For assuredly one-tenth part of his errors and disasters would have been fatal to the power and influence of any minister who had not possessed, in the highest degree, the talents of a parliamentary leader. While his schemes were confounded, while his predictions were falsified, while the coalitions which he had labored to form were falling to pieces, while the expeditions which he had sent forth at enormous cost were ending in route and disgrace, while the enemy against whom he was feebly contending was subjugating Flanders and Brabant, the Electorate of Mentz, and the Electorate of Treves, Holland, Piedmont, Liguria, Lombardy, his authority over the House of Commons was constantly becoming more and more absolute. There was his empire, there were his victories, his Lodi and his Arcola, his Rivoli and his Marengo. If some great misfortune, a pitched battle lost by the allies, the annexation of a new department to the French Republic, a sanguinary insurrection in Ireland, a mutiny in the fleet, a panic in the city, a run on the bank, had spread dismay through the ranks of his majority, that dismay lasted only till he rose from the Treasury bench, drew up his haughty head, stretched his arm with commanding gesture, and poured forth, in deep and sonorous tones, the lofty language of inextinguishable hope and inflexible resolution. Thus, through a long and calamitous period, every disaster that happened without the walls of Parliament was regularly followed by a triumph within them. At length he had no longer an opposition to encounter. Of the

great party which had contended against him during the first eight years of his administration more than one-half now marched under his standard, with his old competitor the Duke of Portland at their head; and the rest had, after many vain struggles, quitted the field in despair. Fox had retired to the shades of St. Anne's Hill, and had there found, in the society of friends whom no vicissitude could estrange from him, of a woman whom he tenderly loved, and of the illustrious dead of Athens, of Rome, and of Florence, ample compensation for all the misfortunes of his public life. Session followed session with scarcely a single division. In the eventful year 1799, the largest minority that could be mustered against the government was twenty-five.

In Pitt's domestic policy there was at this time assuredly no want of vigor. While he offered to French Jacobinism a resistance so feeble that it only encouraged the evil which he wished to suppress, he put down English Jacobinism with a strong hand. The Habeas Corpus Act was repeatedly suspended. Public meetings were placed under severe restraints. The government obtained from Parliament power to send out of the country aliens who were suspected of evil designs; and that power was not suffered to be idle. Writers who propounded doctrines adverse to monarchy and aristocracy were proscribed and punished without mercy. It was hardly safe for a republican to avow his political creed over his beefsteak and his bottle of port at a chop-house. The old laws of Scotland against sedition, laws which were considered by Englishmen as barbarous, and which a succession of governments had suffered to rust, were now furbished up and sharpened anew. Men of cultivated minds and polished manners were, for offences which at Westminster would have been treated as mere misdemeanors, sent to herd with felons at Botany Bay. Some reformers, whose opin-

ions were extravagant, and whose language was intemperate, but who had never dreamed of subverting the government with physical force, were indicted for high treason, and were saved from the gallows only by the righteous verdicts of juries. This severity was at the time loudly applauded by alarmists whom fear had made cruel, but will be seen in a very different light by posterity. The truth is, that the Englishmen who wished for a revolution were, even in number, not formidable, and, in everything but number, a faction utterly contemptible, without arms, or funds, or plans, or organization, or leader. There can be no doubt that Pitt, strong as he was in the support of the great body of the nation, might easily have repressed the turbulence of the discontented minority by firmly yet temperately enforcing the ordinary law. Whatever vigor he showed during this unfortunate part of his life was vigor out of place and season. He was all feebleness and languor in his conflict with the foreign enemy who was really to be dreaded, and reserved all his energy and resolution for the domestic enemy who might safely have been despised.

One part only of Pitt's conduct during the last eight years of the eighteenth century deserves high praise. He was the first English minister who formed great designs for the benefit of Ireland. The manner in which the Roman Catholic population of that unfortunate country had been kept down during many generations seemed to him unjust and cruel; and it was scarcely possible for a man of his abilities not to perceive that, in a contest against the Jacobins, the Roman Catholics were his natural allies. Had he been able to do all that he wished, it is probable that a wise and liberal policy would have averted the rebellion of 1798. But the difficulties which he encountered were great, perhaps insurmountable; and the Roman Catholics were, rather

by his misfortune than by his fault, thrown into the hands of the Jacobins. There was a third great rising of the Irishry against the Englishry, a rising not less formidable than the rising of 1641 and 1689. The Englishry remained victorious; and it was necessary for Pitt, as it had been necessary for Oliver Cromwell and William of Orange before him, to consider how the victory should be used. It is only just to his memory to say that he formed a scheme of policy, so grand and so simple, so righteous and so humane, that it would alone entitle him to a high place among statesmen. He determined to make Ireland one kingdom with England, and, at the same time, to relieve the Roman Catholic laity from civil disabilities, and to grant a public maintenance to the Roman Catholic clergy. Had he been able to to carry these noble designs into effect, the Union would have been an Union indeed. It would have been inseparably associated in the minds of the great majority of Irishmen with civil and religious freedom; and the old Parliament in College Green would have been regretted only by a small knot of discarded jobbers and oppressors, and would have been remembered by the body of the nation with the loathing and contempt due to the most tyrannical and the most corrupt assembly that ever sate in Europe. But Pitt could execute only one half of what he had projected. He succeeded in obtaining the consent of the Parliaments of both kingdoms to the Union; but that reconciliation of races and sects, without which the Union could exist only in name, was not accomplished. He was well aware that he was likely to find difficulties in the closet. But he flattered himself that, by cautious and dexterous management, those difficulties might be overcome. Unhappily, there were traitors and sycophants in high place who did not suffer him to take his own time and his own way, but prematurely disclosed his scheme to

the King, and disclosed it in the manner most likely to irritate and alarm a weak and diseased mind. His Majesty absurdly imagined that his Coronation oath bound him to refuse his assent to any bill for relieving Roman Catholics from civil disabilities. To argue with him was impossible. Dundas tried to explain the matter, but was told to keep his Scotch metaphysics to himself. Pitt, and Pitt's ablest colleagues, resigned their offices. It was necessary that the King should make a new arrangement. But by this time his anger and distress had brought back the malady which had, many years before, incapacitated him for the discharge of his functions. He actually assembled his family, read the Coronation oath to them, and told them that, if he broke it, the Crown would immediately pass to the House of Savoy. It was not until after an interregnum of several weeks that he regained the full use of his small faculties, and that a ministry after his own heart was at length formed.

The materials out of which he had to construct a government were neither solid nor splendid. To that party, weak in numbers, but strong in every kind of talent, which was hostile to the domestic and foreign policy of his late advisers, he could not have recourse. For that party, while it differed from his late advisers on every point on which they had been honored with his approbation, cordially agreed with them as to the single matter which had brought on them his displeasure. All that was left to him was to call up the rear ranks of the old ministry to form the front rank of a new ministry. In an age pre-eminently fruitful of parliamentary talents, a cabinet was formed containing hardly a single man who, in parliamentary talents, could be considered as even the second rate. The most important offices in the state were bestowed on decorous and laborious mediocrity. Henry Addington was at the head of the Treasury. He had been an

early, indeed a hereditary, friend of Pitt, and had by Pitt's influence been placed, while still a young man, in the chair of the House of Commons. He was universally admitted to have been the best speaker that had sate in that chair since the retirement of Onslow. But nature had not bestowed on him very vigorous faculties ; and the highly respectable situation which he had long occupied with honor had rather unfitted than fitted him for the discharge of his new duties. His business had been to bear himself evenly between contending factions. He had taken no part in the war of words ; and he had always been addressed with marked deference by the great orators who thundered against each other from his right and from his left. It was not strange, that, when, for the first time, he had to encounter keen and vigorous antagonists, who deal hard blows without the smallest ceremony, he should have been awkward and unready, or that the air of dignity and authority which he had acquired in his former post, and of which he had not divested himself, should have made his helplessness laughable and pitiable. Nevertheless, during many months, his power seemed to stand firm. He was a favorite with the King, whom he resembled in narrowness of mind, and to whom he was more obsequious than Pitt had ever been. The nation was put into high good humor by peace with France. The enthusiasm with which the upper and middle classes had rushed into the war spent itself. Jacobinism was no longer formidable. Everywhere there was a strong reaction against what was called the atheistical and anarchical philosophy of the eighteenth century. Bonaparte, now First Consul, was busied in constructing out of the ruins of old institutions a new ecclesiastical establishment and a new order of knighthood. That nothing less than the dominion of the whole civilized world would satisfy his selfish ambition was not

yet suspected ; nor did even wise men see any reason to doubt that he might be as safe a neighbor as any prince of the House of Bourbon had been. The treaty of Amiens was therefore hailed by the great body of the English people with extravagant joy. The popularity of the minister was for the moment immense. His want of parliamentary ability was, as yet, of little consequence ; for he had scarcely any adversary to encounter. The old opposition delighted by the peace, regarded him with favor. A new opposition had indeed been formed by some of the late ministers, and was led by Grenville in the House of Lords, and by Windham in the House of Commons. But the new opposition could scarcely muster ten votes and was regarded with no favor by the country. On Pitt the ministers relied as on their firmest support. He had not, like some of his colleagues, retired in anger. He had expressed the greatest respect for the conscientious scruple which had taken possession of the royal mind ; and he had promised his successors all the help in his power. In private his advice was at their service. In Parliament he took his seat on the bench behind them ; and, in more than one debate, defended them with powers far superior to their own. The King perfectly understood the value of such assistance. On one occasion, at the palace, he took the old minister and the new minister aside. " If we three," he said, " keep together, all will go well."

But it was hardly possible, human nature being what it is, and, more especially, Pitt and Addington being what they were, that this union should be durable. Pitt, conscious of superior powers, imagined that the place which he had quitted was now occupied by a mere puppet which he had set up, which he was to govern while he suffered it to remain, and which he was to fling aside as soon as he wished to resume his old position. Nor was it long

before he began to pine for the power which he had relinquished. He had been so early raised to supreme authority in the state, and had enjoyed that authority so long, that it had become necessary to him. In retirement his days passed heavily. He could not, like Fox, forget the pleasures and cares of ambition in the company of Euripides or Herodotus. Pride restrained him from intimating, even to his dearest friends, that he wished to be again minister. But he thought it strange, almost ungrateful, that his wish had not been divined, that it had not been anticipated, by one whom he regarded as his deputy.

Addington, on the other hand, was by no means inclined to descend from his high position. He was, indeed, under a delusion much resembling that of Abon Hassan in the Arabian tale. His brain was turned by his short and unreal Caliphate. He took his elevation quite seriously, attributed it to his own merit, and considered himself as one of the great triumvirate of English statesmen, as worthy to make a third with Pitt and Fox.

Such being the feeling of the late minister and of the present minister, a rupture was inevitable; and there was no want of persons bent on making that rupture speedy and violent. Some of these persons wounded Addington's pride by representing him as a lackey, sent to keep a place on the Treasury bench till his master should find it convenient to come. Others took every opportunity of praising him at Pitt's expense. Pitt had waged a long, a bloody, a costly, an unsuccessful war. Addington had made peace. Pitt had suspended the constitutional liberties of Englishmen. Under Addington those liberties were again enjoyed. Pitt had wasted the public resources. Addington was carefully nursing them. It was sometimes but too evident that these compliments were not unpleasing to Addington. Pitt became cold and reserved. During

many months he remained at a distance from London. Meanwhile his most intimate friends, in spite of his declarations that he made no complaint, and that he had no wish for office, exerted themselves to effect a change of ministry. His favorite disciple, George Canning, young, ardent, ambitious, with great powers and great virtues, but with a temper too restless and a wit too satirical for his own happiness, was indefatigable. He spoke; he wrote; he intrigued; he tried to induce a large number of the supporters of the government to sign a round robin desiring a change; he made game of Addington and of Addington's relations in a succession of lively pasquinades. The minister's partisans retorted with equal acrimony, if not with equal vivacity. Pitt could keep out of the affray only by keeping out of politics altogether; and this it soon became impossible for him to do. Had Napoleon, content with the first place among the sovereigns of the Continent, and with a military reputation surpassing that of Marlborough or of Turenne, devoted himself to the noble task of making France happy by mild administration and wise legislation, our country might have long continued to tolerate a government of fair intentions and feeble abilities. Unhappily, the treaty of Amiens had scarcely been signed, when the restless ambition and the insupportable insolence of the First Consul convinced the great body of the English people that the peace, so eagerly welcomed, was only a precarious armistice. As it became clearer and clearer that a war for the dignity, the independence, the very existence of the nation was at hand, men looked with increasing uneasiness on the weak and languid cabinet which would have to contend against an enemy who united more than the power of Louis the Great to more than the genius of Frederic the Great. It is true that Addington might easily have been a better war minister than Pitt, and

could not possibly have been a worse. But Pitt had cast a spell on the public mind. The eloquence, the judgment, the calm and disdainful firmness, which he had, during many years, displayed in Parliament, deluded the world into the belief that he must be eminently qualified to superintend every department of politics; and they imagined, even after the miserable failures of Dunkirk, of Quiberon, and of the Helder, that he was the only statesman who could cope with Bonaparte. This feeling was nowhere stronger than among Addington's own colleagues. The pressure put on him was so strong that he could not help yielding to it; yet, even in yielding, he showed how far he was from knowing his own place. His first proposition was, that some insignificant nobleman should be First Lord of the Treasury and nominal head of the administration, and that the real power should be divided between Pitt and himself, who were to be secretaries of state. Pitt, as might have been expected, refused even to discuss such a scheme, and talked of it with bitter mirth. "Which secretaryship was offered to you?" his friend Wilberforce asked. "Really," said Pitt, "I had not the curiosity to enquire." Addington was frightened into bidding higher. He offered to resign the Treasury to Pitt, on condition that there should be no extensive change in the government. But Pitt would listen to no such terms. Then came a dispute such as often arises after negotiations orally conducted, even when the negotiators are men of strict honor. Pitt gave one account of what had passed; Addington gave another: and, though the discrepancies were not such as necessarily implied any intentional violation of truth on either side, both were greatly exasperated.

Meanwhile the quarrel with the First Consul had come to a crisis. On the 16th of May, 1803, the King sent a message calling on the House of Commons to support him in withstanding the

ambitious and encroaching policy of France; and, on the 22d, the House took the message into consideration.

Pitt had now been living some months in retirement. There had been a general election since he had spoken in Parliament; and there were two hundred members who had never heard him. It was known that on this occasion he would be in his place; and curiosity was wound up to the highest point. Unfortunately, the short-hand writers were, in consequence of some mistake, shut out on that day from the gallery, so that the newspapers contained only a very meagre report of the proceedings. But several accounts of what passed are extant; and of those accounts the most interesting is contained in an unpublished letter written by a very young member, John William Ward, afterwards Earl of Dudley. When Pitt rose, he was received with loud cheering. At every pause in his speech there was a burst of applause. The peroration is said to have been one of the most animated and magnificent ever heard in Parliament. "Pitt's speech," Fox wrote a few days later, "was admired very much, and very justly. I think it was the best he ever made in that style." The debate was adjourned; and on the second night Fox replied in an oration which, as the most zealous Pittites were forced to acknowledge, left the palm of eloquence doubtful. Addington made a pitiable appearance between the two great rivals; and it was observed that Pitt, while exhorting the Commons to stand resolutely by the executive government against France, said not a word indicating esteem or friendship for the Prime Minister.

War was speedily declared. The First Consul threatened to invade England at the head of the conquerors of Belgium and Italy, and formed a great camp near the Straits of Dover. On the other side of those Straits the whole population of our island was ready to rise up

as one man in defence of the soil. At this conjuncture, as at some other great conjunctures in our history, the conjuncture of 1660, for example, and the conjuncture of 1688, there was a general disposition among honest and patriotic men to forget old quarrels, and to regard as a friend every person who was ready, in the existing emergency, to do his part towards the saving of the state. A coalition of all the first men in the country would, at that moment, have been as popular as the coalition of 1783 had been unpopular. Alone in the kingdom the King looked with perfect complacency on a cabinet in which no man superior to himself in genius was to be found, and was so far from being willing to admit all his ablest subjects to office that he was bent on excluding them all.

A few months passed before the different parties which agreed in regarding the government with dislike and contempt came to an understanding with each other. But in the spring of 1804 it became evident that the weakest of ministries would have to defend itself against the strongest of oppositions, an opposition made up of three oppositions, each of which would, separately, have been formidable from ability, and which, when united, were also formidable from number. The party which had opposed the peace, headed by Grenville and Windham, and the party which had opposed the renewal of the war, headed by Fox, concurred in thinking that the men now in power were incapable of either making a good peace or waging a vigorous war. Pitt had, in 1802, spoken for peace against the party of Grenville, and had, in 1803, spoken for war against the party of Fox. But of the capacity of the cabinet, and especially of its chief, for the conduct of great affairs, he thought as meanly as either Fox or Grenville. Questions were easily found on which all the enemies of the government could act cordially together. The unfortunate First Lord of the Treasury, who had, during

the earlier months of his administration, been supported by Pitt on one side, and by Fox on the other, now had to answer Pitt, and to be answered by Fox. Two sharp debates, followed by close divisions, made him weary of his post. It was known, too, that the Upper House was even more hostile to him than the Lower, that the Scotch representative peers wavered, that there were signs of mutiny among the bishops. In the cabinet itself there was discord, and worse than discord, treachery. It was necessary to give way : the ministry was dissolved ; and the task of forming a government was entrusted to Pitt.

Pitt was of opinion that there was now an opportunity, such as had never before offered itself, and such as might never offer itself again, of uniting in the public service, on honorable terms, all the eminent talents of the kingdom. The passions to which the French Revolution had given birth were extinct. The madness of the innovater and the madness of the alarmist had alike had their day. Jacobinism and Anti-Jacobinism had gone out of fashion together. The most liberal statesman did not think that season propitious for schemes of parliamentary reform ; and the most conservative statesman could not pretend that there was any occasion for gagging bills and suspensions of the Habeas Corpus Act. The great struggle for independence and national honor occupied all minds ; and those who were agreed as to the duty of maintaining that struggle with vigor might well postpone to a more convenient time all disputes about matters comparatively unimportant. Strongly impressed by these considerations, Pitt wished to form a ministry including all the first men in the country. The Treasury he reserved for himself ; and to Fox he proposed to assign a share of power little inferior to his own.

The plan was excellent ; but the king would not hear of it. Dull, obstinate, unforgiving,

and, at that time, half mad; he positively refused to admit Fox into his service. Anybody else, even men who had gone as far as Fox, or further than Fox, in what his Majesty considered as Jacobinism, Sheridan, Grey, Erskine, should be graciously received; but Fox never. During several hours Pitt labored in vain to reason down this senseless antipathy. That he was perfectly sincere there can be no doubt: but it was not enough to be sincere; he should have been resolute. Had he declared himself determined not to take office without Fox, the royal obstinacy would have given way, as it gave way, a few months later, when opposed to the immutable resolution of Lord Grenville. In an evil hour Pitt yielded. He flattered himself with the hope that, though he consented to forego the aid of his illustrious rival, there would still remain ample materials for the formation of an efficient ministry. That hope was cruelly disappointed. Fox entreated his friends to leave personal considerations out of the question, and declared that he would support, with the utmost cordiality, an efficient and patriotic ministry from which he should be himself excluded. Not only his friends, however, but Grenville, and Grenville's adherents, answered, with one voice, that the question was not personal, that a great constitutional principle was at stake, and that they would not take office while a man eminently qualified to render service to the commonwealth was placed under ban merely because he was disliked at court. All that was left to Pitt was to construct a government out of the wreck of Addington's feeble administration. The small circle of his personal retainers furnished him with a very few useful assistants, particularly Dundas, who had been created Viscount Melville, Lord Harrowby, and Canning.

Such was the inauspicious manner in which Pitt entered on his second administration. The whole history of that administration was

of a piece with the commencement. Almost every month brought some new disaster or disgrace. To the war with France was soon added a war with Spain. The opponents of the minister were numerous, able, and active. His most useful coadjutors he soon lost. Sickness deprived him of the help of Lord Harrowby. It was discovered that Lord Melville had been guilty of highly culpable laxity in transactions relating to public money. He was censured by the House of Commons, driven from office, ejected from the Privy Council, and impeached of high crimes and misdemeanors. The blow fell heavily on Pitt. It gave him, he said in Parliament, a deep pang; and, as he uttered the word pang, his lip quivered, his voice shook, he paused, and his hearers thought that he was about to burst into tears. Such tears shed by Eldon would have moved nothing but laughter. Shed by the warm-hearted and open-hearted Fox, they would have moved sympathy, but would have caused no surprise. But a tear from Pitt would have been something portentous. He suppressed his emotion, however, and proceeded with his usual majestic self-possession.

His difficulties compelled him to resort to various expedients. At one time Addington was persuaded to accept office with a peerage; but he brought no additional strength to the government. Though he went through the form of reconciliation, it was impossible for him to forget the past. While he remained in place he was jealous and punctilious; and he soon retired again. At another time Pitt renewed his efforts to overcome his master's aversion to Fox; and it was rumored that the King's obstinacy was gradually giving way. But meanwhile, it was impossible for the minister to conceal from the public eye the decay of his health, and the constant anxiety which gnawed at his heart. His sleep was broken. His food ceased to nourish him. All who

passed him in the Park all, who had interviews with him in Downing Street, saw misery written in his face. The peculiar look which he wore during the last months of his life was often pathetically described by Wilberforce, who used to call it the Austerlitz look,

Still the vigor of Pitt's intellectual faculties, and the intrepid haughtiness of his spirit, remained unaltered. He had staked everything on a great venture. He had succeeded in forming another mighty coalition against the French ascendancy. The united forces of Austria, Russia and England might, he hoped, oppose an insurmountable barrier to the ambition of the common enemy. But the genius and energy of Napoleon prevailed. While the English troops were preparing to embark for Germany, while the Russian troops were slowly coming up from Poland, he, with rapidity unprecedented in modern war, moved a hundred thousand men from the shores of the Ocean to the Black Forest, and compelled a great Austrian army to surrender at Ulm. To the first faint rumors of this calamity Pitt would give no credit. He was irritated by the alarms of those around him. "Do not believe a word of it," he said: "it is all a fiction." The next day he received a Dutch newspaper containing the capitulation. He knew no Dutch. It was Sunday; and the public offices were shut. He carried the paper to Lord Malmesbury, who had been minister in Holland; and Lord Malmesbury translated it. Pitt tried to bear up; but the shock was too great; and he went away with death in his face.

The news of the battle of Trafalgar arrived four days later, and seemed for a moment to revive him. Forty-eight hours after that most glorious and most mournful of victories had been announced to the country came the Lord Mayor's day; and Pitt dined at Guildhall. His popularity had declined. But on this occasion the multitude, greatly excited by the re-

cent tidings, welcomed him enthusiastically, took off his horses in Cheapside, and drew his carriage up King Street. When his health was drunk, he returned thanks in two or three of those stately sentences of which he had a boundless command. Several of those who heard him laid up his words in their hearts; for they were the last words that he ever uttered in public: "Let us hope that England, having saved herself by her energy, may save Europe by her example."

This was but a momentary rally. Austerlitz soon completed what Ulm had begun. Early in December Pitt had retired to Bath, in the hope that he might there gather strength for the approaching session. While he was languishing there on his sofa arrived the news that a decisive battle had been fought and lost in Moravia, that the coalition was dissolved, that the Continent was at the feet of France. He sank down under the blow. Ten days later, he was so emaciated that his most intimate friends hardly knew him. He came up from Bath by slow journeys, and, on the 11th of January, 1806, reached his villa at Putney. Parliament was to meet on the 21st. On the 20th was to be the parliamentary dinner at the house of the First Lord of the Treasury in Downing Street; and the cards were already issued. But the days of the great minister were numbered. The only chance for his life, and that a very slight chance, was, that he should resign his office, and pass some months in profound repose. His colleagues paid him very short visits, and carefully avoided political conversation. But his spirit, long accustomed to dominion, could not, even in that extremity, relinquish hopes which everybody but himself perceived to be vain. On the day on which he was carried into his bed-room at Putney, the Marquess Wellesley, whom he had long loved, whom he had sent to govern India, and whose administration had been eminently

able, energetic, and successful, arrived in London after an absence of eight years. The friends saw each other once more. There was an affectionate meeting and a last parting. That it was the last parting Pitt did not seem to be aware. He fancied himself to be recovering, talked on various subjects cheerfully, and with an unclouded mind, and pronounced a warm and discerning eulogium on the Marquess's brother Arthur. "I never," he said, "met with any military man with whom it was so satisfactory to converse." The excitement and exertion of this interview were too much for the sick man. He fainted away; and Lord Wellesley left the house, convinced that the close was fast approaching.

And now members of Parliament were fast coming up to London. The chiefs of the opposition met for the purpose of considering the course to be taken on the first day of the session. It was easy to guess what would be the language of the King's speech, and of the address which would be moved in answer to that speech. An amendment condemning the policy of the government had been prepared, and was to have been proposed in the House of Commons by Lord Henry Petty; a young nobleman who had already won for himself that place in the esteem of his country which, after the lapse of more than half a century, he still retains. He was unwilling, however, to come forward as the accuser of one who was incapable of defending himself. Lord Grenville, who had been informed of Pitt's state by Lord Wellesley, and had been deeply affected by it, earnestly recommended forbearance; and Fox, with characteristic generosity and good nature, gave his voice against attacking his now helpless rival. "*Sunt lacrymæ rerum,*" he said, "*et mentem mortalia tangunt.*" On the first day, therefore, there was no debate. It was rumored that evening that Pitt was better. But on the following morning his

physicians pronounced that there were no hopes. The commanding faculties of which he had been too proud were beginning to fail. His old tutor and friend, the Bishop of Lincoln, informed him of his danger, and gave such religious advice and consolation as a confused and obscured mind could receive. Stories were told of devout sentiments fervently uttered by the dying man. But these stories found no credit with any body who knew him. Wilberforce pronounced it impossible that they could be true. "Pitt," he added, "was a man who always said less than he thought on such topics." It was asserted in many after-dinner speeches, Grub Street elegies, and academic prize poems and prize declamations, that the great minister died exclaiming, "Oh my country!" This is a fable: but it is true that the last words which he uttered, while he knew what he said, were broken exclamations about the alarming state of public affairs. He ceased to breathe on the morning of the 23d of January, 1806, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the day on which he first took his seat in Parliament. He was in his forty-seventh year, and had been, during near nineteen years, First Lord of the Treasury, and undisputed chief of the administration. Since parliamentary government was established in England, no English statesman has held supreme power so long. Walpole, it is true, was First Lord of the Treasury during more than twenty years: but it was not till Walpole had been some time First Lord of the Treasury that he could be properly called Prime Minister.

It was moved in the House of Commons that Pitt should be honored with a public funeral and a monument. The motion was opposed by Fox in a speech which deserves to be studied as a model of good taste and good feeling. The task was the most invidious that ever an orator undertook; but it was performed with a humanity and delicacy which were

warmly acknowledged by the mourning friends of him who was gone. The motion was carried by 288 votes to 89.

The 22d of February was fixed for the funeral. The corpse, having lain in state during two days in the Painted Chamber, was borne with great pomp to the northern transept of the Abbey. A splendid train of princes, nobles, bishops, and privy councillors followed. The grave of Pitt had been made near to the spot where his great father lay, near also to the spot where his great rival was soon to lie. The sadness of the assistants was beyond that of ordinary mourners. For he whom they were committing to the dust had died of sorrows and anxieties of which none of the survivors could be altogether without a share. Wilberforce, who carried the banner before the hearse, described the awful ceremony with deep feeling. As the coffin descended into the earth, he said, the eagle face of Chatham from above seemed to look down with consternation into the dark house which was receiving all that remained of so much power and glory.

All parties in the House of Commons readily concurred in voting forty thousand pounds to satisfy the demands of Pitt's creditors. Some of his admirers seemed to consider the magnitude of his embarrassments as a circumstance highly honorable to him; but men of sense will probably be of a different opinion. It is far better, no doubt, that a great minister should carry his contempt of money to excess than that he should contaminate his hands with unlawful gain. But it is neither right nor becoming in a man to whom the public has given an income more than sufficient for his comfort and dignity to bequeath to that public a great debt, the effect of mere negligence and profusion. As First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, Pitt never had less than six thousand a year, besides an excellent house. In 1792 he was forced by his

royal master's friendly importunity to accept for life the office of Warden of the Cinque Ports, with near four thousand a year more. He had neither wife nor child: he had no needy relations: he had no expensive tastes: he had no long election bills. Had he given but a quarter of an hour a week to the regulation of his household, he would have kept his expenditure within bounds. Or, if he could not spare even a quarter of an hour a week for that purpose, he had numerous friends, excellent men of business, who would have been proud to act as his stewards. One of those friends, the chief of a great commercial house in the city, made an attempt to put the establishment in Downing Street to rights; but in vain. He found that the waste of the servants' hall was almost fabulous. The quantity of butcher's meat charged in the bills was nine hundredweight a week. The consumption of poultry, of fish, and of tea was in proportion. The character of Pitt would have stood higher if, with the disinterestedness of Pericles and of De Witt, he had united their dignified frugality.

The memory of Pitt has been assailed, times innumerable, often justly, often unjustly; but it has suffered much less from his assailants than from his eulogists. For, during many years, his name was the rallying cry of a class of men with whom, at one of those terrible conjunctures which confound all ordinary distinctions, he was accidentally and temporarily connected, but to whom, on almost all great questions of principle, he was diametrically opposed. The haters of parliamentary reform called themselves Pittites, not choosing to remember that Pitt made three motions for parliamentary reform, and that, though he thought that such a reform could not safely be made while the passions excited by the French revolution were raging, he never uttered a word indicating that he should not be prepared at a more convenient season to bring the question forward a

fourth time. The toast of Protestant ascendancy was drunk on Pitt's birthday by a set of Pittites who could not but be aware that Pitt had resigned his office because he could not carry Catholic emancipation. The defenders of the Test Act called themselves Pittites, though they could not be ignorant that Pitt had laid before George the Third unanswerable reasons for abolishing the Test Act. The enemies of free trade called themselves Pittites, though Pitt was far more deeply imbued with the doctrines of Adam Smith than either Fox or Grey. The very negro-drivers invoked the name of Pitt, whose eloquence was never more conspicuously displayed than when he spoke of the wrongs of the negro. This mythical Pitt, who resembles the genuine Pitt as little as the Charlemagne of Ariosto resembles the Charlemagne of Eginhard, has had his day. History will vindicate the real man from calumny disguised under the semblance of adulation, and will exhibit him as what he was, a minister of great talents, honest intentions, and liberal opinions, pre-eminently qualified, intellectually and morally, for the part of a parliamentary leader, and capable of administering, with prudence and moderation, the government of a prosperous and tranquil country, but unequal to surprising and terrible emergencies, and liable, in such emergencies, to err grievously, both on the side of weakness and on the side of violence.



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